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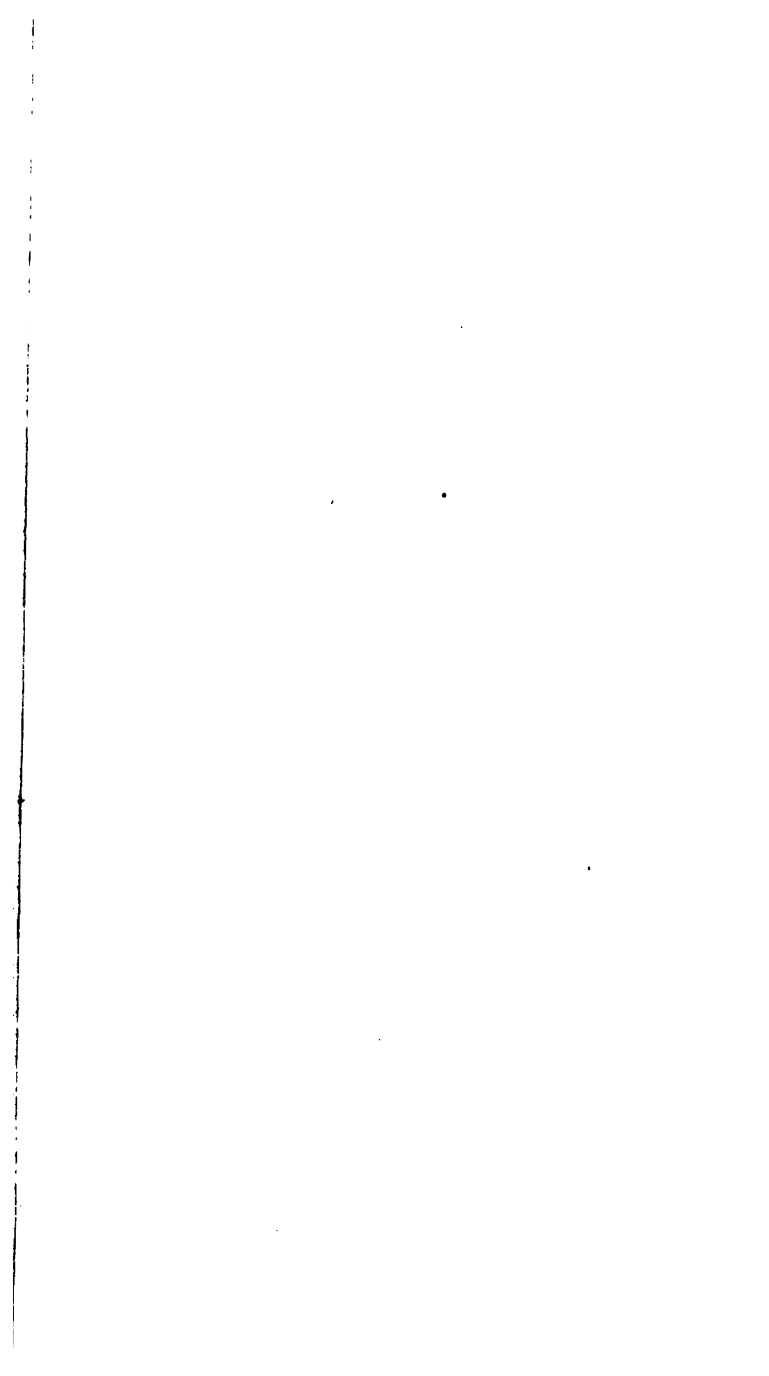
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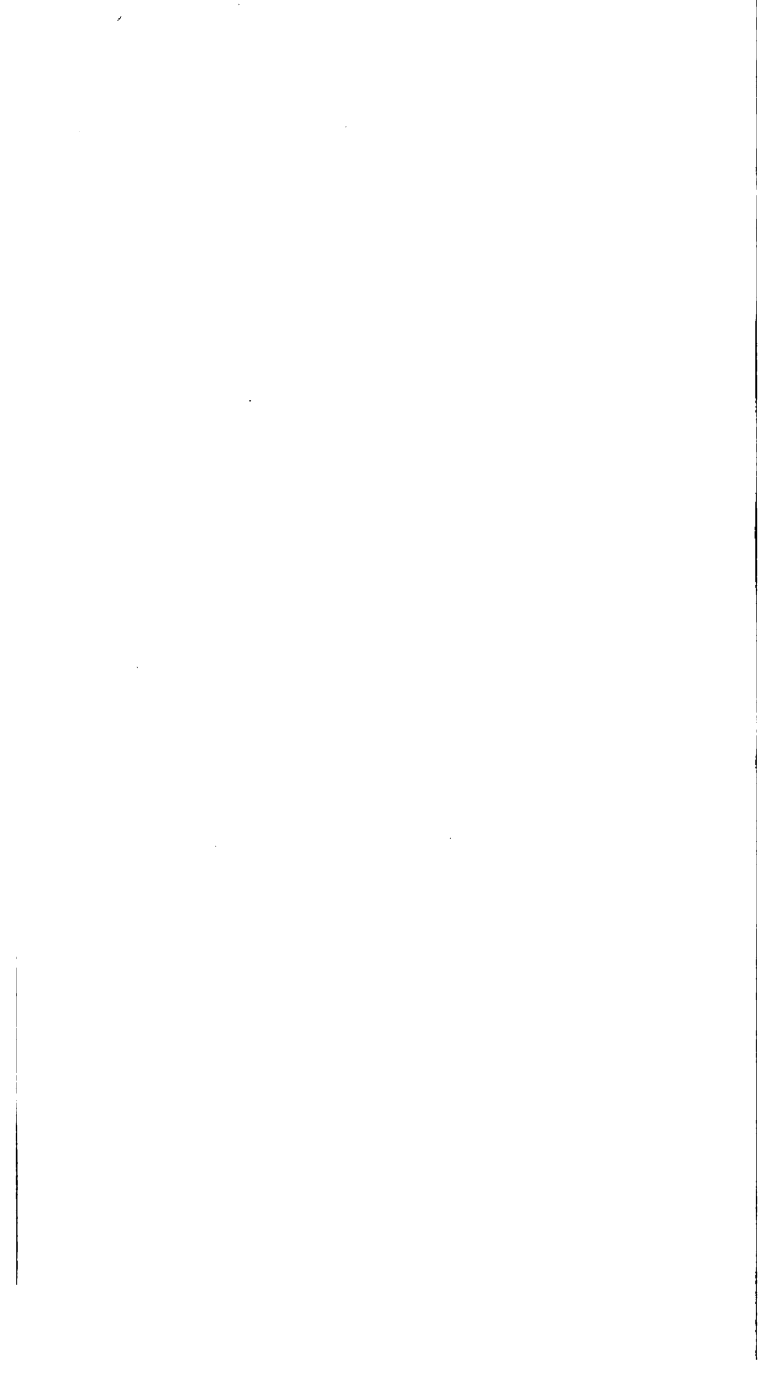












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THE  
RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF MAN;

TRACING

RELIGION AND SUPERSTITION

FROM THEIR SOURCE.

BY D. MORISON.

Behold, God exalteth by His power: who teacheth like Him?

Who hath enjoined Him His way? or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?

Remember that thou magnify His work, which men behold.

Every man may see it, man may behold it afar off.

JOB xxxvii. 22—25.



SMITH, ELDER, AND CO.;  
DUBLIN: W. CURRY, JUN., AND CO.;  
GLASGOW: JAMES LUMSDEN AND SON;  
LIVERPOOL: W. GRAPEL.

1838.



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## TO THE QUEEN.

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MADAM,

The personal characters of Sovereigns are rarely brought before their Subjects unadorned by flattery, or unperverted by political feeling; but so concurrent has been the testimony, from all parties, to your Majesty's excellent disposition and understanding, that I am deterred, neither by the humble appearance of my little book, nor by the startling nature of the contents, from laying it at the foot of the Throne. The subject it treats of is of equal importance in the palace and in the cottage.

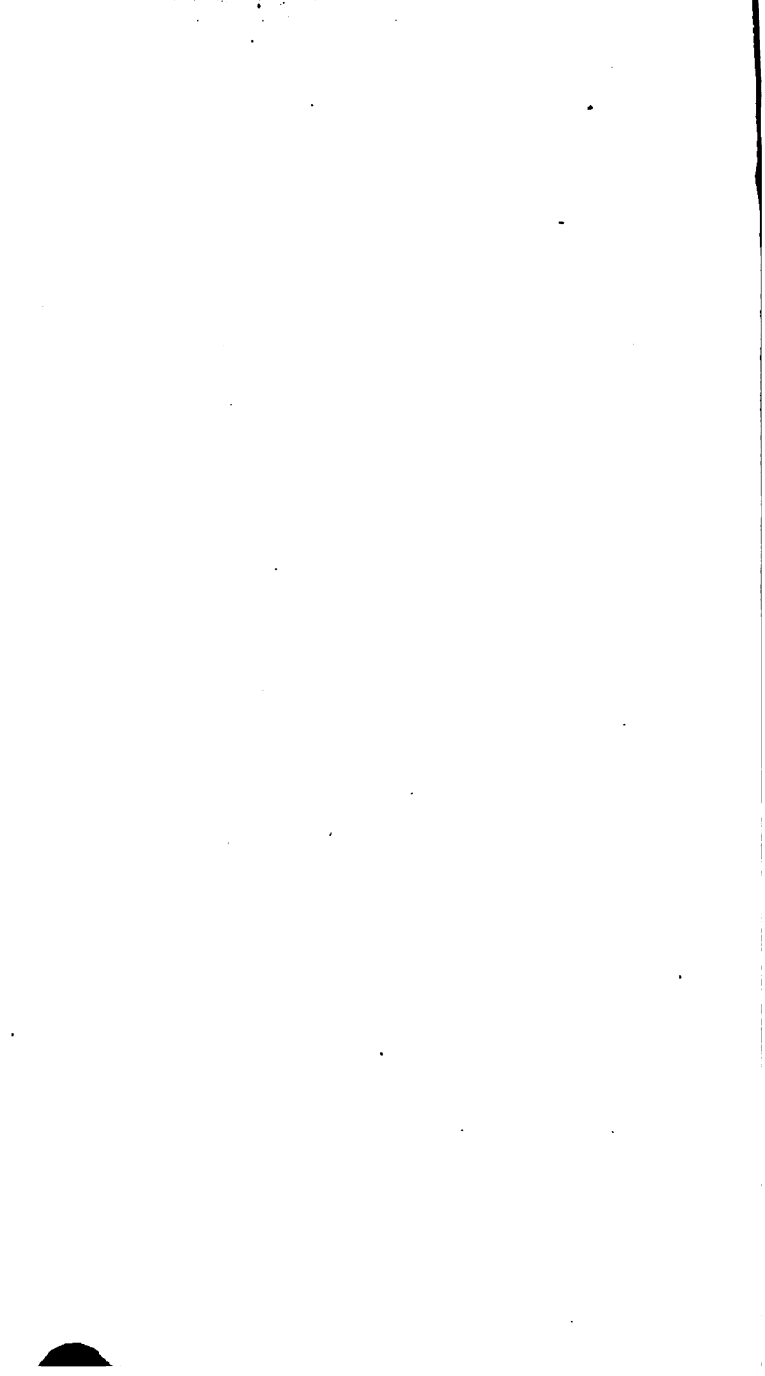
I think myself happy that it has fallen to my lot to complete these pages in the reign of a Princess, accustomed, like her people, to think and to judge for herself. The enquiries contained in them, though now condensed, have furnished delightful relaxation through the vicissitudes of a busy life, and during a long series of years. The path in which I found the gratification, which always arises to the mind from the contemplation of TRUTH, lies open to all. Whoever may be induced to accompany me in it, will not advance far without discovering that the enquiry owes all its strength to THE SOURCE from whence it is drawn, and all its weakness to the pen of the expositor,

Your Majesty's

Humble but loyal Subject,

D. MORISON.

LIVERPOOL,  
JANUARY, 1838.



## INTRODUCTION.

---

IN the following pages, the nature of the instruction, in Divine things, given to mankind, at various periods, is enquired into; and the influence of that instruction, on their religious customs and opinions, traced.

Those opinions have been so various, and the modes of worship so multiform, that it would be hopeless to attempt such an enquiry within the limits of the present volume,—were it to be accompanied by an analysis, or even an outline, of each system of faith, or form of devotion, which has had its day, of adoption and of rejection, in the world.

Amidst that variety, however, an intercommunity of thought has been observed, which can be accounted for by none of the ordinary causes that regulate human affairs. Much learning, often with eminent success, has been employed in tracing that coincidence; but such researches have, generally, been directed to insulated parts of the subject, incidentally arising out of other enquiries, and have rested their proofs on reasonings which could be appreciated by the practised philologist alone.

To account for these coincidences, on general principles, is the main object of the present work. That object is sought for, not by instituting comparisons between the various theological and mythological economies, and tracing them back to some remote period; but by examining, in the first place, the early

revelations made to man, and the mode of instruction by which these revelations were illustrated. The First Principles, so obtained, are then applied to the several great branches into which the history of religion and superstition naturally divides itself; and the proof of their correctness rests, not merely on their accounting for occasional resemblances, but on the elucidations they afford of the great and leading features of the systems.

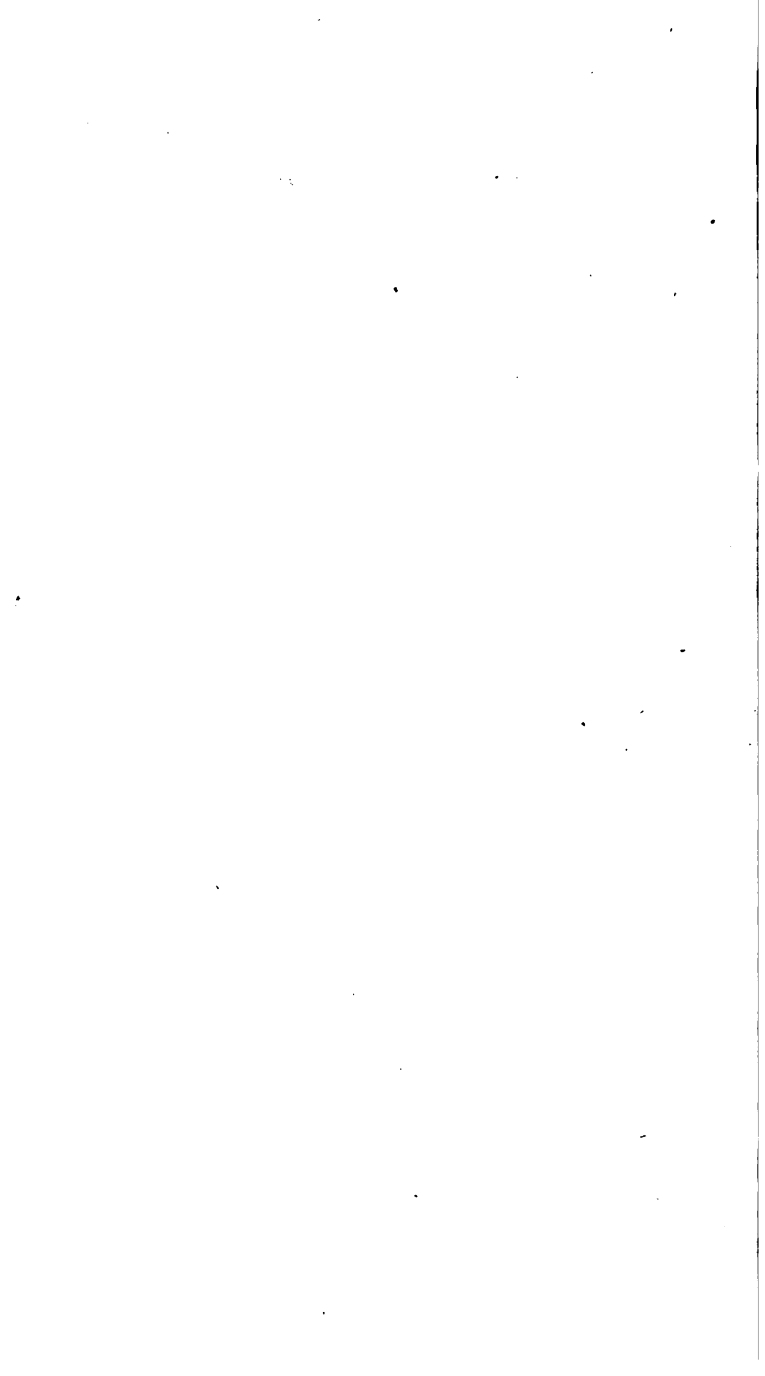
As the subject "toucheth ALL MEN," the utmost pains have been taken to divest it of abstruse discussion, and to advance nothing but what any reader of the Bible, in his own language, may judge of and investigate. At the same time, if the key given be the true one, it opens up a rich field of research to the philologist, and aids the biblical student in the most important and interesting enquiry to which his attention can be directed.

It is scarcely necessary, after this, to add, that the infallibility and certainty of the Bible, on every subject, is the basis on which the whole discussion rests.

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## CHAPTER I.

# THE CREATION.

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**THERE** are two propositions, almost of the nature of axioms, which ought to be kept steadily in mind, when surveying the works of God, whether those of his visible creation, or of his moral government.

The first of these initiatory truths is, that, the choice of manner, of time, of form, and of arrangement in the works of God, being wholly of Divine Will, there must have been some design in, some reason for, the mode adopted, seeing that any other mode was equally within the Divine Power.

The second initiatory proposition, likewise nearly allied to truths of a self-evident kind, is, that, when God reveals any thing to man, concerning his works, of which his creatures could not have been informed without revelation, the Almighty must have had a reason for making it known; into which reason it is not only lawful, but the duty of man, to enquire. 'Things revealed belong to us and to our children.'

Applying these axioms to the subject with which Revelation opens—the creation of the heavens and



the earth, it may be assumed as an incontrovertible truth, not only that there was a most important reason for *six days* being employed in that work, when Almighty Power might have effected it in one moment and at one word, but that God intended the reason of it to be enquired into and to be understood by man, otherwise the fact itself would not have formed the subject of an express revelation from heaven.

SCIENCE will be applied to in vain, for an explanation either of the choice of six days, or why the fact forms the first lesson recorded in the page of inspiration. The philosophy of the schools observes the phenomena of nature, explains them by the laws which are found to regulate them, and directs the knowledge, so obtained, to the improvement of the useful and liberal arts. Scientific enquiry is seldom carried, with advantage, beyond this point. All the works of God, even the most minute portions, or the apparently most circumscribed classes of them, are, to human capacity, infinite; and all the industry and research of mankind have as completely failed in tracing matter to its simple elements, as all their reasoning powers have been found incapable of expressing, or even of imagining, how matter was called into existence, or impressed with its varied forms. There is a limit, even to the 'godlike apprehension' of man; and a bourne, beyond which all would have been darkness, even to the brightest intellect, had it not pleased God to reveal what took place while as yet there was no man, 'or ever the earth was.'

Man, feeling acutely the limited extent of his knowledge, turns to Revelation, in the hope of finding those secret operations of nature laid open, which his own powers cannot penetrate; and he lays the book aside, in disappointment, because it neither gratifies his curiosity, nor corroborates his favorite fancies and theories. He forgets, that discoveries in natural philosophy have evidently been granted by Providence to him, as the reward of industry; that the obscurity in which nature is wrapped, stimulates that industry on which his temporal comfort chiefly depends; so that *revelations*, on such a subject, would have disarmed his curiosity and blunted his energy. He forgets, also, that discoveries in science have generally kept pace with, and have been in no small degree regulated by, the wants of mankind and the state of society: while the revelations from heaven have been of unvarying importance and universal interest.

To the volume of Revelation, then, the wise and the simple must alike return, if they desire to know aught of the CAUSE of all they see around them. Without it, the wise can see no farther than the fool; and, without it, 'as the fool dieth so dieth the wise.' They have both considered all the works which are done under the sun: they have seen all things full of labour: the eye not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing. The one has looked on, perhaps, with a more acute eye and with deeper thought; has seen more of contrivance, more of design, yea, more of Omniscience, more of Omnipotence, more of a God—yet, without Revelation, both would de-

part, as unable to account for the appearance of creation, now and at the beginning, as to understand why God should have given such sore travail for the sons of men to be exercised withal. This is a hard saying; but no one knows the truth of it so assuredly, as he to whom it is most unpalatable; as he who affects to hide, under a laugh or a sneer, the corroding conviction that, in all the heights or depths of philosophy, he cannot obtain the least insight into the origin or object of his own existence, or of the creation of which he forms a part.

On applying to the inspired Records, which open with an account of the creation of all we see around us, we find, as already noticed, no circumstances stated, such as might be expected, were the object of the revelation to aid philosophical enquiry or scientific research. But if the elucidation of natural phenomena be, evidently, *not* the main object for which the account of creation-week was recorded in the Bible; and if we are warranted in assuming that it did not find a place there capriciously or accidentally, we must look elsewhere for a key to the introduction of such a subject in such a place. And where can we look, with more propriety, than to the volume to which it forms the solemn and appropriate introduction?

In searching the Scriptures for elucidations of the first subject contained in them, there are two widely-diffused misapprehensions, of which we must previously disabuse our minds. The first is, that the work of creation was effected in solitude and in silence; and the second, that the great subjects,

which afterwards formed the matter of revelation to man, were not contemplated when the earth was created, but arose afterwards out of unforeseen or accidental circumstances. Now, so far from creation-work having been done in solitude and in silence, every fiat regarding it was pronounced in the presence of myriads of angels, who beheld the operations with the deepest interest, and "shouted for joy," as they were successively unfolded; and, so far from the intentions of God regarding man having then been uncertain, or at least kept *secret*, they had been so publicly known in heaven, that the inspired writers, subsequently, founded much of their doctrine on the assured and incontrovertible fact, that they had been PROMISED *in Christ Jesus* ERE THE WORLD BEGAN. Not only this, but the same writers assert that these purposes were opposed or objected to; that the fulfilment of these purposes was then, as it still is, THE TRUTH of God, and that the objection to them, or offence at them, was then, as it still is, THE LIE.

It is not necessary for us to know, neither can we, while in the body, comprehend, the nature of the world of spirits. But this much we are assured of, that there are, and were previous to the creation, principalities and powers amongst them; and that amongst them there were some "who kept not their first estate," in consequence of "not abiding in the truth."

It is equally hidden from us, what was the precise *extent*, so to speak, of the truth revealed to them, against which they rebelled; but it is evident

that it respected God's moral government, and that government as it has since been exercised towards man. The opposition of the fallen angels to that government, is still called their enmity to the truth—to the same truth from which they fell.

Giving due weight to these considerations, it follows, that if we find some GREAT PREDOMINANT PRINCIPLE pervading the workings of Providence, and successively triumphing over opposition, in every varied form which it has assumed, we may safely adopt *that* as either being the principle, or at least bearing a marked analogy to the principle, in the Divine Economy, against which legions of angels rose in rebellion.

We cannot long survey the Providence of God, either in its workings in the material universe, or in its moral operations, without being struck with the prevalence of one great and leading principle in both—that of GOOD COMING OUT OF EVIL, or MERCY REJOICING OVER JUDGMENT. The dark cloud, while it scatters the lightning and spreads abroad the tempest in its course, refreshes the burning earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater. Affliction, which riseth not from the ground, but cometh, like the cloud, from heaven, afterward yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, unto those who are exercised thereby.

Whether we turn to the early history of man, or to the events which are passing around us—to the extraordinary acts of Providence towards God's chosen people of old, or to its ordinary influences

on the world at large; whether we read of miraculous interruptions of the laws of nature, or contemplate the unvarying courses of the seasons, we everywhere meet with this great, this predominant principle. It is felt and owned by every contemplative mind—it bears the impress of Divinity—it is that never-ceasing witness to the existence of an over-ruling Providence, at which even infidelity turns pale! The evil passions of men, and the original and constant instigator of those passions, may often turn good into evil. The introduction of a law, in Nature and in Providence, by which evil is made productive of good, could alone have proceeded from the union of ineffable goodness with unlimited power; and it abounds so conspicuously throughout all the works of God, as to carry conviction to the mind, that it is THE ANSWER of Infinite Power and Wisdom, to an opposing or objecting spirit.

From the moment that EVIL, or, what is the same thing, *objection to the ways of God*, arose, it required either refutation or annihilation. Now we are explicitly told, that this evil spirit, or opposition, existed ere the world was created; and among the myriads of angels who witnessed the birth of the world, and ‘desired to look into’ the wonders which the finger of God then wrought, we have the highest authority for believing, there were many who looked on with envy, jealousy, and mistrust. This is no theoretical or fanciful matter—it is true, if God’s word be true.

Under such circumstances, God ‘in the be-

ginning created the heavens and the earth.' Upon that earth, and in sight of those heavens, a manifestation of the Godhead was to take place, and a discovery of his character to be made, which was for ever 'to still the enemy and the avenger.' Almighty Power is creating matter, that the Divine Attributes may be illustrated and magnified; and the spiritual hosts view, with enquiring eyes, the development of that universe, in which the great question is to be for ever set at rest, and in which their ministrations, for good or for evil, are to be exercised.

But how can God thus, as it were, reason with the creatures of his will and his power? How, instead of making that power at once felt and known in the annihilation of the rebels, can he thus propose to answer the objectors, by vindicating the truth and separating it from the lie? Even if it were consistent with his ineffable holiness so to do, who is to be the JUDGE? Can the vindication of the acts of the Almighty be submitted to those who have rebelled against him; or even unto those of whom the rebels might allege that they served not God for nought? O! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! We behold, in the solution of this "hard question," the first and great reason for the Threefold Revelation and operation of the Godhead. God reveals himself, for this godlike purpose, Three in One, "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders!" The Son comes forth from the Father, to vindicate his character as the just God and the merciful: the

Father delights to honour and approve the works of the Son: and the Holy Spirit proceeds from both, the evidence of the union and perfection of the Godhead. There was now room for a promise to be fulfilled, a covenant to be ratified, and an oath to be confirmed. Thus, 'God, willing to shew unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, or covenant, confirmed it by an oath.' All proceeded from the councils of heaven, 'from the foundation of the world.'

Had power, and the wisdom united with power, which consists in the extent, arrangement, and variety of works, and the adaptation of means to the end,—had *these* been the only attributes of God which were to be exhibited in the creation, it would not have been necessary (to speak after the manner of men) that the Almighty should have made this Triune revelation of himself, nor that the world should have been called into existence otherwise than by one exertion of the Divine will. But attributes far more glorious and wonderful than these were to be manifested. The Almighty, in his moral and spiritual operations amongst the creatures he was about to form, was to do marvels, such as none but Infinite Power could effect, none but Infinite Wisdom and Goodness imagine or devise. He was not only to produce good out of evil, but to make evil subservient to his purpose of mercy.

It was, therefore, a part of Divine wisdom, that the visible creation should, distinctly and incontrovertibly, bear the IMPRESS of the SAME ALMIGHTY HAND which was to get the victory over moral and



spiritual wickedness. The visible creation was to be the scene of this conflict; it was on it that a manifestation of the Godhead was to be made, transcending all that men or angels could have conceived of the Divinity. It was meet, therefore, that every whit of that creation should appear in the order, and assume the form, best fitted to foreshow and illustrate the most magnificent of all the Creator's marvellous works—so that 'the invisible things, or purpose of God, might, at the creation, be clearly preached and seen, from the things that were made.'

Accompanying, then, Moses, the Man of God, to this interesting period, and contemplating the works of creation-week as illustrative of, and foreshowing, the more important and glorious spiritual works, to which all creation was to be made conducive; we see amazing wisdom and goodness in the mode of operation, as well as in the nature and order, of the works, and in the time allotted to each.

As to the mode of operation, it is recorded that 'THE SPIRIT JEHOVAH *moved*,' brooded, or produced; forming, concreting, and preparing the germs of those works, which were afterwards to appear, and to be perfected by the light. THE WORD JEHOVAH, without whom was not any thing made that was made, *commanded*; and JEHOVAH THE JUDGE approved, and '*saw* all very good.' Thus, in all the works of God, there ever have been Three bearing witness; the Son speaking, the Spirit giving power to his word, and the Father approving. This is the characteristic of *every* work of God; and no word or work, wanting *this* testimony, can claim a

divine origin, or have any title to be believed or received as coming from God. On this perfect concurrence and equality of the Divine Three, the Lord Jesus rested the authority for every word he spake, and every work he performed.

In specific TIMES, or days, being allotted to the different works, we see also the same wisdom. Every separate work must have its own day, its own evening and morning; else there would have been no assurance that the spiritual creation would also be carried on and perfected within a definite period or 'set time.' And, to make it manifest that matter is obeying a command, not acting by any inherent virtue or power in itself, the day closes not until the work appointed for it is finished. The work of that day, according to the word spoken, is completed; but nature makes no advances, takes no intermediate progressive step; every operation must pause, until the word of the following day be spoken. And when every operation was finished, God RESTED from his work; an earnest, or type, of the rest which his spiritual creation shall enjoy, when he, sitting on the throne, shall say, 'Behold, I make all things new.'

If such figurative design is to be traced in the mode and time of creation, how much more apparent is it in *the nature and order* of the works; and how godlike is its first display! Darkness, not the mere absence of light, but material darkness, 'darkness that might be felt,' encompassed the face of the deep. The Word of God said, 'LET LIGHT BE;' the Spirit of God moved, and 'LIGHT WAS.' God, the judge, pronounced it 'GOOD,' and 'divided

between the light and between the darkness; as it has ever been the prerogative of his Word to determine the boundaries between good and evil.

Thus the work of the first day did not merely attest the power of God; it was not merely a splendid and a surprising operation of his Spirit on newly created matter; it was a SIGN, to all in heaven, of the great moral and spiritual work which the creation was yet to witness; it was a pre-ordination of a FIGURE, by which mercy rejoicing over judgment was to be preached to mankind, so long as day continued to utter speech to day, and night to night was to show forth knowledge. Well, indeed, might it be said of this first work of God in the creation, 'Who teacheth like him?'

We cannot any where more appropriately than in this stage of the inquiry, entreat attention to the true origin of the figurative mode of teaching, by which the invisible things of God have ever been illustrated by himself, more especially in the works of creation. No one thinks of denying, every one admits, the beauty of the figure of LIGHT, as illustrative of the Gospel, and of the God of the Gospel, who is light, and in him is no darkness at all. But how comes it that nature furnishes us with such a figure? Can it be *accidental*? Could it have been an *afterthought* of Him who spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, to *suggest* to them, by his Spirit, the aptitude of the figure of light to illustrate the truth? Or did not He rather, who knew the end from the beginning, so call light out of darkness as to constitute the material light, the first,

the greatest, the most enduring figure of the light of life, which the Word, made flesh, was to speak, the Spirit to shed abroad, and the Father to confirm? Thus was the material world *expressly made* to illustrate the immaterial; and thus did the coincidence between them furnish a mode of instruction and of illustration, which, as we shall afterwards find, was peculiarly suited to the condition of the world, while the promises concerning the Messiah were entirely of a *prospective* nature.

Let us here, too, for a moment, just turn our attention to the CERTAINTY of the truth of the Mosaic account, which is afforded by such a coincidence, and to the amazing superiority which is thereby given it over all the *scientific* theories which have had their brief hour of feverish existence. The man of science looks on the earth but as a scintillation from one of the many orbs with which the universe is filled; and the great modern authority for the inefficiency of six days, even in the hands of THE ALMIGHTY, to produce the geological phenomena of the earth, gravely tells us, in a work professedly written to prove the being and attributes of God from the works of creation, that the Scriptures are *incorrect* in stating that God called light *out of darkness*; but that it must have existed, for thousands of years previously, if not in the present, at least in more ancient systems! Supposing that such writers *can* prove, independently of revelation, that there is a Great First Cause—who thanks them? They only prove that which insanity alone denies. What man wants to know is this—Is the God who

made the universe the God who dictated that which is called the Word of God? If the erratic star theorists prove any thing, it is something far short of, if not directly the reverse of this. Now this is precisely what Moses undertakes to demonstrate. He does not merely say that it was A great power or intelligence—A God which made the heavens—he asserts that it was GOD HIMSELF; not an undefined, incomprehensible first cause, but THE Lord God, whose peculiar attributes, as the just God and the Saviour, form the subject of the whole Bible. Accordingly, the first proof he brings forward of this, is, that the first work of creation, bringing light out of darkness, bore the most beautiful analogy to the emanation of the light of life and truth, which all the history recorded by him, and all the law given by him, prefigured. Now, if the expectation of Moses had not been fulfilled; if the meaning of light coming out of darkness had not been, in the most godlike and glorious manner, illustrated in the fulness of time, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, we might have doubted the philosophy of Moses, and grasped at the glimmerings of the Bridgewater Treatises. But when we find his philosophy and his expectations alike confirmed, two thousand years after he was laid in the dust—confirmed in a way that none but God himself could have devised; we have the most complete and perfect evidence, which heaven itself can give, that it was the Spirit of the Lord Jesus which guided his pen, when he thus wrote, ‘And God said, Let there be light, and there was light; and God divided be-

tween the light and between the darkness.' Thus did God, in the beginning, provide a splendid type of the work he was to perform; and thus did he, in the end of the world, attest the veracity of his servants the prophets, against all the opposition of science, falsely so called.

Ask him who hath watched the bed of sickness during the dark night of suffering; who has just come from closing the eyes which are no longer to beam on him with affection and fondness; but who, while he sits down to read of the morning of the resurrection, beholds the first beams of the sun dissipating the shadows of the night; ask him if his feelings and his understanding do not alike testify, that none but the God who burst the bands of death could have provided so beautiful a figure of *that rising* as he now sees beaming before him? Nay, ask the philosopher himself, when the fears of death and the judgment assail him in his closet, whether the God who showed at the creation that he could bring *life out of death*, or the incomprehensible First Cause of the equally incomprehensible infinite systems, be the God to whom he would cling for hope when dust is about to return to dust?

It would extend this chapter much beyond the limits that must necessarily be prescribed to it, were we to examine minutely into the figurative nature of the other works of creation week. It is the less requisite, as we shall have to refer to many of them afterwards, when a closer examination into the mode of instruction prevalent in the early ages of the world, shall have better prepared our readers for

accompanying us in such investigations. All that we wish at present is, to rouse the attention of the reader to such prominent circumstances in the Mosaic account of the creation, as seem to indicate *an intention* on the part of the Creator to fit his material works for illustrating his spiritual; to provide in them a storehouse of instruction, in matters which could never be proved by abstract reasoning so well as by parable.

For this purpose, it seems only necessary to notice generally, *the classes* of illustration which appear to have been provided for, in the work of each successive day.

The expansion, or stretching out, of the firmament on the second day, furnished a very important class. Man, for whom all was made, was to be of the earth, earthy; he therefore could comprehend nothing whatever of the nature or the operation of *spirit*, save in so far as it could be illustrated to him by analogy or figure. That he might be so instructed, Divine Wisdom framed or stretched out a heaven, *material* like all the rest of the creation, but so ethereal in its nature and appearances, as to represent, and often to be substituted in doctrine for, 'the heaven of heavens.' So admirably is this firmament, sky, or atmosphere, suited to this end, that, in the Hebrew language, the same word is used to denote both *wind* and *spirit*; and our Lord, who knew, when he framed the expansion, the nature of man's faculties, and the mode of teaching best calculated for instructing him in spiritual matters, so stretched it out, that he thus referred to it in the

days of his incarnation: 'the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the *Spirit*.'

But the illustrations which this part of the creation affords, are not limited to the internal or hidden operations of spirit, in distinction from matter. The noblest descriptions of the glory and power of the Almighty—the most majestic visions of heaven itself, are clothed in language, borrowed from those appearances in nature produced by the work of the second day of creation-week; nay, those phenomena are, themselves, made the attendants of his footsteps, when he visited his chosen people, as the fittest emblems of the attributes which invest him. 'He made darkness his secret place: his pavilions round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness of his presence his thick clouds passed: hailstones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice.' When he spake to Job out of the whirlwind, or reproved him by the mouth of Elihu, the figures by which his goodness as well as greatness were preached, were chiefly drawn from the expansion and its appearances; and when his second coming is spoken of, it is in these words, 'Behold he cometh with clouds!' Who thus framed the expansion, so that the visible heaven should, as far as man's frame could bear it, convey some impression—to his mind of 'the unspeakable things of the third heaven, which it is not lawful (or rather possible) for a man to utter'? He, who



in the days of his flesh said, 'If I have told you earthly things (if I have illustrated my doctrine by earthly figures), and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you (openly) of heavenly things?'

The gathering together of the waters, and the process of vegetation, on the third day, furnish classes of illustrations of wonderful extent, force, and beauty.

The obedience of the waters to the Divine command is often referred to, throughout the Scriptures, as symbolical of the control of the Almighty over the numerous nations by whom the earth is overspread. Hence, 'the waters,' in the hieroglyphical language of the Revelation, are said to be 'peoples and multitudes, and nations and tongues.' It is fashionable to talk of 'the *tide* of public affairs,' and 'the force of the current of public opinion.' When such figures are applied, either proudly or fearfully, to bodies politic, it would be well if it were kept more in mind, that, 'though the floods lift up their waves, the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea;' for they are all under the command of Him who 'stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and *the tumult of the people.*' Indeed, when we reflect on the prophetic and previously determined course into which the destinies of nations have been directed, we see in it evidence of the control of the same hand which 'sent the waters down by the valleys;' and of the same authority which said to the sea, 'Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.' When the Lord Jesus

'with authority commanded the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm,' he did not more infallibly prove that it was HIS voice, which on the third day of creation commanded the waters to go into one place, than he gave evidence that 'He is governor among the nations.'

As this first part of the work of the third day presaged the power of the Son of God over the present world and its affairs, so did the production of vegetable life, out of 'the dry earth,' foretell the power of his voice over 'the children of the resurrection,' who shall 'spring up like the grass of the field.' Need we remind our readers, that the most striking *proof* in nature of it not being a thing incredible that God should raise the dead, is the fact, that the seed sown in the earth *dies* ere it spring forth? Was there any natural *necessity* for this? If not, *why* was such a law implanted in nature? Was it merely to give us an opportunity of remarking how very *singular* it was, that seeds, as well as men, required to die, ere they could put on 'newness of life'? How long shall we be prepared to own prescience and contrivance in natural things, and yet be deterred from tracing the prophetic finger of the Author of life eternal, in works, which he not only claims as his own, but which he himself uses as illustrations of the life that is to come?

We should be tempted to anticipate much that will more appropriately claim attention in a more advanced stage of the enquiry, were we at all to enter here on the consideration of the other ORDINATIONS; particularly of the fourth day, when the

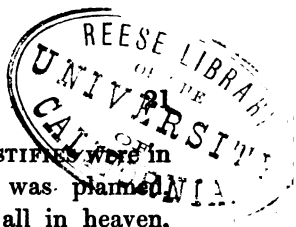
light was concentrated in the instruments of light, or heavenly bodies, which were set for SIGNS, as well as for seasons. These are so copiously used, in a figurative sense, throughout the Bible, that the most superficial reader of it, and the most *literal* interpreter of it, are constrained to own that mere fancy or imagination, on the part of the sacred poets and historians, will scarcely account for the frequency of the introduction of the SIGNS of heaven, or the singularity of their application. The references already made to the earlier works, are sufficient to establish such a distinct allusion to the invisible works of God, at the creation, as prove that 'the time, mode, and disposition of the works' neither arose from any inherent natural causes, existing amongst the materials employed, nor from any indefinite choice (if the term can be used without profanity) on the part of Him to whom all modes were equally open and easy; but had their source in the same unchangeable Divine Wisdom, which provided a pattern for the tabernacle and temple—in the same Divine love which fitted every part of the visible creation, as well as of the temple, to 'utter forth that peculiar glory of God,' which consists in promising mercy, and in keeping it. Those to whom that promise is valuable, will delight to trace it in the works of creation; and, as they trace it, a conviction of the truth and certainty of the inspired record of the creation will arise in their minds, which the smiles or sneers of science or infidelity will in vain assail. They gain, at every step, new assurances, that the purposes of

## THE CREATION.

grace and mercy, which creation TESTIFIES were in the Divine mind when the universe was planned. It will continue to be the wonder of all in heaven, when a complete knowledge of the mechanism of creation shall have stripped science of its intricacy, and removed the film from the eyes of philosophy.

We, who are privileged to have the pages of the Bible open to us, do not require to investigate, deeply, the lessons which creation enforces; but we shall neither read the Bible, nor survey Nature, with less interest, if we see reason to conclude, that the finest images with which the Word of God abounds, were originally drawn from a source, enriched *for that very purpose*, by the hand of Divine wisdom. Neither shall we, in investigating the primeval philosophy or theology (for they were then one), be able to appreciate its great principles, or understand its imperishable sayings and leading truths, if we are not so far grounded in the rudiments of early knowledge, as to trace, in the allusions with which it abounds to the visible creation, not *fancied* coincidences or *imaginative* allegories, but illustrations of the invisible things of God, implanted on the earth and spread abroad upon the heavens by the finger of God himself, to keep alive his truth, and to perpetuate the memory of his covenant.

Let the philosopher, then, please himself with contemplating the beauty, the order, the infinite extent, and the variety in the universe; let him search for proofs of the Divine wisdom and power in the most minute insect or atom, that floats in the water or in the sun-beam; and carry his reflections to infinity



of worlds, teeming with life, and all upheld by the same Almighty power: we quarrel not with his avocation; it is, in many respects, a delightful one—it is, in many instances, a useful one; and the mind may often thus be led from nature to nature's God. But such reflections come infinitely short of those which fill the mind, when we follow the inspired penman to the birth of creation; and, with him, behold every fiat of the Almighty illustrating more and more, as the works arose, the purposes of grace and mercy stored in the Divine mind; until we see the whole creation finished, and standing to this day a witness to the truth of God; bearing testimony, not only that 'the hand which made it is divine,' but that the same hand made it which penned the Scriptures; and that the 'thoughts towards man' which dictated the Scriptures, were the thoughts which guided the hand of Omnipotence when it spread forth the heavens as a curtain.

## CHAPTER II.

SCRIPTURE GEOLOGY.

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DID philosophy confine itself to reflections and enquiries, merely inconsistent with, not in absolute contradiction of Scripture, we might well decline to allude farther to the objections it has started to the Mosaic account of creation. But when, from a few insulated facts, which the greatest authorities on the subject acknowledge to be totally inadequate to the formation of a theory, it is attempted to throw discredit on the veracity, as well as the philosophy, of Moses, we should have a weak cause indeed, if it did not furnish us with an ample reply to *such* reasoners.

By many it would be, and has been, deemed a sufficient answer, that all the operations of nature, in the beginning, were brought about in a miraculous way; and that we ought not to attempt to say how much, or how little, could be done in six days *miraculously*. This reply is generally followed up with the remark, that the Bible was not given to instruct in science.

In both parts of this answer, it is scarcely necessary for us to say, we fully coincide. But with regard to the first part of it,—although God did, during the six days, act in a miraculous manner, that is, by means and laws different from those which *now* regulate the course of nature, yet as these means are, to a certain extent, revealed to us, it is certainly lawful for us to enquire how far they account for the present appearances of nature. And as to the second part of the answer, it is most true that the Bible was not written to inculcate science: but it was given to teach TRUTH; and none of its statements, on *any* subject, can be, in any jot or tittle, wide of the truth, or in the smallest degree inconsistent with *fact*.

Now, it is stated as *a fact*, by Moses, not in the first chapter of Genesis alone, but in many other parts of his writings, that in six days God created the heavens and the earth; while it is as confidently stated by modern philosophers that there are *facts* in nature totally at variance with such an assertion. Both cannot be true. The matter is worthy of enquiry, and a few words will fortunately suffice.

It is curious, we had almost said providential, that, at the very time the objections to the Mosaic account are beginning to be noised abroad, certain *electrical* discoveries have been made, which have confounded the wise as much as they have astonished the simple. It is not necessary for us to allude to them here, farther than to say, that we believe no truly scientific person *now* can hesitate for a moment to grant, that the operations of nature

which, under ordinary circumstances, might require thousands of years to perfect them, might, *under strong electrical influence*, be produced in an incredibly short space of time; within a period, in short, directly in proportion to the degree of electric influence brought to bear on the materials employed. If therefore we find, from the Mosaic account, that the earth must, at one period, have been under a peculiarly excited electric action, all objections to rapidity of formation become as unphilosophical, as they always have been unscriptural.

But it is objected that, even if the difficulties attending rapidity of formation of *strata* could be got over, there are fossil remains of animals, found in those strata, which, from their size and perfect formation, could not have been suddenly produced. Let the extraordinary electric state of the infant world be once proved, however, and this objection fades away with the other, of which indeed it forms a part. Are not the minute insects, which are born and die in an hour, as perfect in their formation as the hugest monster that flies or swims? And if the ordinary electric state of the summer atmosphere produce *these* instantaneously, would not increased energy in the productive power add to the size as well as numbers of the animal creation?

Let us now look, for a little, to the plain, simple, and intelligible account of the creation recorded in the Bible. The earth was 'without form,' that is, according to the use of the phrase in other parts of Scripture, without beauty of arrangement. It was 'void,' or empty, and 'darkness was upon the face



of the deep;' or, as it is elsewhere said, 'darkness *compassed* it as a swaddling band.' This is the description of a hollow sphere, covered with water, and surrounded by an atmosphere, so gross and palpable as to receive the name of *darkness*—not the mere absence of light, but such 'darkness as might be *felt*;' such darkness as gives force and meaning to this reference to it, 'I the Lord form the light, and *create* the darkness.'

'And the Spirit Jehovah moved' (brooded) 'on the faces of the deep;' not merely on the external surface, but on the layers or faces under the abyss. What these *broodings* were, is not revealed to us. They were the *secret* operations of the Spirit, and 'secret things belong to God.' Ere man can understand or explain *all* that the internal structure of the earth contains, he must know more than has been or ever will be revealed to him in this world.

'And God said let light *BE*, and light *WAS*.' Where? Beyond the surface of the dense atmosphere? Coming from an older planet, and piercing that atmosphere by degrees? NO. 'God commanded the light to shine *out of darkness*.' '*I make DARKNESS light*.' God made that darkness into light. Inattention to this simple, but important fact, has indeed spread darkness over the whole transaction.

It is, too generally, supposed, that light *dawned gently* at the first, and broke in upon the earth by degrees, much in the same manner as we now see the sun breaking through a cloud. But such a

supposition is at variance with all the rest of the description. The light 'WAS'—instantaneously burst forth *in the darkness*—in the very atmosphere itself. It was, as we shall afterwards see, the same *kind* of light as was subsequently placed in the sun; and was consequently of the nature of *fire*, and therefore electrical in its nature. Indeed the word, in the original, signifies both *light* and *fire*.

In this condensed atmosphere light or fire burst forth; and if its power and effects are, at this day, so wonderful, when proceeding from a body 95 millions of miles distant from us; what must they have been, acting in *such* a powerful atmosphere, in immediate contact with the earth! Let it be remembered that the earth was then under water; and let the attentive observer of nature say, whether there be any phenomena in the stratification of the earth, so far as they can be discovered, which are not explained, by the shell of the earth being under water while undergoing this concentrated action of electric fire?—or whether there be any one, amongst all the theories which have attempted to overturn the Mosaic narrative, which accounts so satisfactorily as *it* does for the formation of crystallized rocks, and of basaltic strata; for the pulverization of that part of the crust which came into immediate contact with the water; as well as for the diffusion of melted minerals through the fissures which the heat laid open?

On the second day the atmosphere was *expanded*, when the heat would be, in some degree, modified; particularly by means of the evaporation, which

ascended in clouds, and the waters above the expansion were separated from the great deep. This alteration on the temperature would admit of a *modification* of animal and vegetable life, such as is seen in zoophytes, shell-fish, and all slimy productions of amphibious nature. *Now it is particularly remarkable, 1st, that none of these amphibious creatures are afterwards reckoned amongst the productions of the third, fifth, or sixth days ;—2d, that the earth would be in the very condition to produce such things on the second day,—and 3rd, that these productions, either of the evening of the first or of the second day, are the very remains on which the whole system of earlier and less perfect worlds is built.*

On the third day, the great body of the waters descended within the shell of the earth; while the shell of the earth was broken for their descent; and such concussions and overturnings took place, as overwhelmed, and laid up in store amongst the strata, many of those earlier formations which were to minister to the wants of man, or puzzle the geologist. At the deluge, the fountains of this great deep were again broken open; a new dislocation of the shell of the earth took place, and diluvial phenomena were added to the alluvial.

On the third day, also, the earth, now freed from the waters, brought forth its varied vegetable productions.

On the fourth day, instruments of light were created; among which the light and the electric influences were distributed, so as to guide the

motions of the orbs, and bring forth, in due and set order, all the operations of nature.

On the fifth day, all that *moves* in the sea and air was commanded into being—(not the inert productions of a slimy mass, ere yet the water and earth were separated.) And, on the sixth day, animal life appears on the dry ground, which had previously brought forth abundantly for its support.

To the veracity of this brief and simple account of the creation, all nature bears testimony. The circumstances narrated are few, but they are satisfactory and conclusive; and they contrast, beautifully, with the cumbrous systems, which require millions of unrecorded years to support them, and which, after all, leave the mind lost in a mass of conjecture, and in a maze of formations, submersions, deposits, and concretions.

Whether, therefore, we read the Mosaic account of the creation, in its *literal* sense, as descriptive of the *seven* great operations, which, in six days, or six revolutions of the globe, produced all that we see above and around us;—or look beyond the natural appearances, to the Great Truths revealed in them, for the instruction of angels and the hope of man—we are authorised to receive the assertion, as literally true as it is doctrinally instructive, that  
'IN SIX DAYS GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS.'

## CHAPTER III.

### THE FIRST MAN.

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IF a prophet in the Church of Israel, the whole history of which was allegorical, complained thus—‘Ah! Lord God, they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?’ it would be very unreasonable, in the present matter-of-fact age, to expect ready acquiescence in such views of the Divine Economy as have been propounded in the preceding, or may be discussed in this and the following Chapters. But, as the Standard of Truth is the Word of God, and not the Opinion of Man, we shall proceed to apply to that Standard for information respecting an early world; with the more confidence, that we have circumstances afterwards to adduce from that Word, which can be explained on no principles but those which have already guided us in this inquiry.

There are some subjects, the dignity and importance of which give steadiness and skill to the pen; there are others, attended with considerations of such overwhelming interest, that the mind quails under them. Of this nature is the concluding work of creation—THE FORMATION OF MAN. In the consi-

deration of the other works of creation, great as these works were, and inadequately as they were approached, we were encouraged by the assurance, that 'the Voice of Him who spake, and it stood fast,' was the Voice of the One Mediator between God and man,—of Him who afterwards said, 'Fear not; I am the First and the Last.' But, in what we have now to consider, we are introduced, directly, to the counsels of the Divine Three, and the subject is, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness!' Is it possible, for any creature partaking of the nature of Adam, to hear these words, and to reflect, without trembling, on the degradation which *that image* has sustained? It is equally impossible for him, without being lost in wonder, to think of the 'exceeding and eternal weight of glory' which awaits those whose vile bodies shall be, at last, fashioned in the *likeness* of the glorified body of the Son of God. 'How precious, indeed, are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand!'

Incomprehensible, in many respects, as the subject of the 'fearful and wonderful' formation of the human frame is, 'above us, and too wonderful for us,' yet if the propositions, with which we commenced our inquiry, are just, there is evidently some instructive reason for the Spirit of God having recorded THE UNION OF THE TRINITY in this work. We use this phrase advisedly; for to suppose, as many have done, that God spake *to the angels* when he used the terms *us* and *our*, is not only to make

created beings equal with God, and to constitute them *creators*; but involves a most glaring absurdity, as will be evident by noticing Paul's language, in his Epistle to the Hebrews. He there says, that when Christ came into the world, 'He took *not* on him the *nature of angels*, but was made of the seed of Abraham.' Whereas if Adam was made in the likeness of angels, then, when Christ took on him the likeness of sinful flesh, he of necessity took on him the likeness of the angels also! But there is a stronger reason still against any such supposition. The Elohim (plural) who say, 'Let us make man,' are described in the original, as creating, by a verb in the *singular* number. In this, Unity is expressed as distinctly as Plurality;—a Unity which could not have been if the speakers had been distinct in essence; and this peculiarity, not in this place alone, but in innumerable other passages, attending the use of the plural noun Elohim in connexion with a singular verb, is more demonstrative of the acknowledgment of Plurality in Unity, under the Old Testament dispensation, than any formal thesis on the subject could have been. It may also be noticed that the expression in Ecclesiastes, 'Remember thy Creator,' is literally, 'Remember thy Creators.'

In the revelation to man, then, that he was made in the likeness of God himself, it seems to have been, in the first place, intended to warn him of the important station he was to fill among the works of God, and the high estate from which he would fall if seduced from his allegiance.

But this might have been sufficiently inculcated,

without at the same time revealing to him that he was in the likeness of the Unity of the Divine Three. Let us briefly consider those circumstances which seem to account for such a discovery being made to him.

The manifestation of ONE, in and from the God-head, as the destroyer of the works of the Devil, was early to form a fundamental article of revelation and of faith. Preparatory to this, it was absolutely necessary that man should, as far as his faculties would permit, be informed of a plurality in the Divinity, and yet of a perfect unity and unanimity in their operations. A little consideration must convince us, that, for a ground of faith *resting on evidence* (as faith has *always* done), the mere declaration of such being the case would not have been sufficient; neither would it have been understood. Instead of such a declaration, the usual mode of inculcating Divine and spiritual truths was adopted; that of figure, image, or likeness—a mode of instruction infinitely more convincing and intelligible than bare assertion. Man therefore had *a body* prepared for him, and to that body God imparted ‘*the breath of LIVES.*’ In himself, then, there was a union of Three Separate Existences—the Soul, the Spirit, and the Body, in one frame, yet all acting together in the most perfect harmony and unanimity. Here was the likeness, the figure, the image of the Jehovah Elohim; and with such evidence of Plurality in Unity, it could not be a thing *incredible* that his Creators were distinct in essence, yet one in operation. Here is the evidence, in the visible creation, which speaks to the conscience, as well as to the under-



standing; that concluding work of the creation which laughs infidelity to scorn, and gives the lie to Deism. Thus early inculcated was the first and greatest precept of the Law, 'Hear, O Israel! Jehovah our Gods (Elohim) is One Jehovah!'

The likeness of Man to his Creator, has by some been traced in the God-like nature of his apprehension;—as if finite apprehension were a fit image of infinite!—or, in the perfectly *upright* nature of all his feelings and affections;—as if filial affection and piety towards a heavenly parent, were a fit image of the glorious perfections of the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible! But the inadequacy of all such considerations to account for the remarkable language of Scripture on this matter, will be more apparent on an investigation into what really constituted the *innocence* of the first man; and into the true nature of his situation in respect to his Maker, and to the world in which he was placed.

Man was made of the dust of the ground; of the earth, earthy; therefore *finite* in his nature, and *finite* in his capacities. He was 'upright;' but that uprightness could not have been PERFECTION in the abstract, otherwise he would have been equal with God; for, in the abstract sense of goodness and perfection, 'none is good, save One, that is, God.' In that sense no created thing can be good, for 'even the heavens are not clean in his sight, and his angels he chargeth with folly.' But man was perfect, in the sense in which God pronounced all that he had made 'very good;' that is, he was perfectly fitted for the place he was to fill in the creation; and he

was Upright, or Righteous, in the only sense in which man is *ever* said to be righteous before God,—he was in a state of entire and perfect subjection to the righteous will and word of God.

Let us look at this a little more closely, for it is a point of more importance than may at first be imagined.

It has ever been the peculiar characteristic of God to take pleasure in being *trusted*. ‘He taketh pleasure in those who fear him, in such as *trust* in His mercy.’ And the full manifestation of the pleasure He took in this, was made known when He expressed ‘His delight’ in the Son of His love, ‘*because he trusted in Him.*’ Now Adam was precisely in a situation for the exercise of this virtue. Although, doubtless, endowed with every good and perfect gift and faculty, yet beyond the material world which he saw, those faculties could not enable him to penetrate. All beyond the present hour, and the scene which surrounded him, rested entirely on *testimony*. He saw much, and he knew much; but there was something he could not *see*; there was much, his understanding would whisper to him, he did not *know*. Thus there was room for the exercise of Faith, of Dependence, and of Trust. But where there was room for these, there would be access for *Doubt*. So long as Adam entirely trusted the word of God, and did not doubt, so long he was *innocent*; ‘he was upright before Him, and kept him from his transgression.’ From this he kept himself, until, through the seduction of the woman, he listened to the question, ‘Yea, hath God said

so?' when, immediately, he put forth his hand, and transgressed the Divine commandment.

These, and other considerations, which now fall to be noticed, render pointless the sneer of infidelity, at the *trifling* nature of the offence 'which brought death into the world with all our woe.' The transgression, by which Adam fell, was the first sprout from the root of all evil, unbelief—it was rebellion against God, an open profession of union with those who questioned the justice and the equity of the Divine Government. From the terms in which the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was spoken of, and guarded against, there cannot be a doubt of God having revealed to Adam what *the evil* was against which he was so solemnly warned; and what *the death* to which he would be exposed *in the very day he ate thereof*. To suppose that terms, such as *evil* and *death*, would be made use of to Adam, without his knowing what they meant, is indeed to suppose that Adam was blindfolded, that he might be led into temptation. 'Adam was *not* deceived' we are expressly told, on authority which cannot be questioned; and if he was not deceived, but sinned under a full knowledge of his situation and the consequences of his rebellion, then he must have been forewarned that the angels had 'fallen through unbelief, and that he stood by faith.'

That the first man had been instructed concerning *the lie*, and taught the distinction between it and *the truth*;—that he knew it to be *expected* of him that he was to stand firm, in that allegiance from which others fell;—that he was extensively in-

structed in 'the deep things of God,' as figuratively preached in the creation;—and that the spirit of *prophecy* also was granted to him, appears from many circumstances attending his situation.

His own form, as we have seen, was figurative or illustrative of a heavenly truth; and when Eve was taken from his side, he uttered a prophecy concerning the institution of marriage amongst his descendants, while as yet he had no children;—a prophecy which contained a great mystery or figure 'concerning Christ and the church.' He was placed in a garden containing figurative trees; he lived by a Sacramental Tree, the Tree of Life, 'in the midst of the Paradise of God:'—he was forewarned by another figurative tree; and he gave figurative names, as we shall afterwards find, to the animal creation; amongst which, it is most remarkable, was the prophetic name of *Subtilty* and *Deceit*, given by himself to the very creature through whose agency Eve was deceived, and he seduced!

It would be as vain, as it is unnecessary, to attempt an inquiry into the precise nature or extent of the knowledge possessed by Adam; but the circumstances above noticed are sufficiently indicative of a much more intimate acquaintance with the matters that were afterwards to be articles of faith, amongst his descendants, than is compatible with the current opinions respecting his situation in Paradise. Nor let it be objected to this kind of knowledge, that it was premature or unnecessary; for it is no more unreasonable that Adam should have been forewarned of the entrance of sin, than that

the church of God, in her periods of purity and simplicity, in her seasons of 'uprightness' and 'integrity,' should have been told of the fearful state of defection and defilement into which she should fall; or that Paul should have said to the Elders of Ephesus—'of *your own selves* shall men arise speaking perverse things.' We have been led to notice the position of the first man, in this respect, not as a purely speculative point, but as explanatory of the mode of teaching, or form of doctrine, by which he and his descendants were instructed:—a mode, not afterwards introduced, by man's device, to meet a state of matters unprovided for or unthought of by heaven, but one expressly provided for, by Divine Wisdom, when the heavens and the earth were created;—one peculiarly adapted to the frame and faculties of the human race.

The considerations already adduced receive great confirmation, when we observe how admirably the frame and faculties of man are fitted for receiving and sifting EVIDENCE. It is, indeed, remarkable, that the peculiar adaptation of the body, as well as the mind of man, for this purpose, has not engaged a greater share of the attention of physiological and psychological inquirers. There is something, even in the *double* formation of the organs of sense through which evidence is received, which points out the sifting of testimony as one of the primary, and most important, occupations for which man was formed. To this aptitude of the human faculties for reasoning by analogy,—for drawing conclusions from premises which at first sight appear uncon-

nected with the result,—for judging of the whole by a part,—for, in short, imbibing more readily fixed opinions from presumptive than from direct evidence,—to this peculiar and predominant faculty of the mind, conscience, and understanding, we are indebted for the largest share of our enjoyments as moral and intellectual creatures. Through this faculty most of our knowledge is obtained; and all who have studied the phenomena of the mind and understanding of man, either in its infantile or mature state, agree in this, that the most forcible impressions which it receives, are those which reach it in the form of allegory, or through the process of inductive reasoning.

Such a constitution is precisely what we would expect, in a creature formed to ‘live by Faith,’ to be ‘saved by Hope,’ to be supported by Promises, to endure Trials and Afflictions, to act from Conviction. And when we see a creature so constituted, ‘made subject to vanity,’ placed in this very situation of trial, difficulty, and danger, yet surrounded by objects calculated to excite, arouse, and interest his mental powers; objects calculated to exercise the most noble faculty with which he is endowed—that of forming conclusions from presumptive and latent evidence; when, looking down from Eden through the course of time, we observe him receiving lesson after lesson, still more calculated to encourage the exercise of the same faculty; and, when we find those lessons recorded in a Book, all tending, amidst endless variety, to the same point—that of urging him to look through signs to the things signified—

that of appealing to his capability of sifting evidence—that of exhorting him to hold by the conviction arising from that evidence, in preference to any other mode of reasoning, however specious, in preference to any temporary gain, however great,—we are constrained to own, that the hand of GOD is here, and that none but his Maker, nothing but Omnipotence and Omniscience, could have, all along, and in so many diverse manners, surrounded him with ‘so great a cloud of witnesses.’

In all these respects, save in the absence of affliction at first, Adam seems to have been similarly situated with his descendants. He lived by faith, in a state of trial. But faith, being a matter of conviction,—being a thorough persuasion of the truth of certain propositions, must have had *evidence* to rest upon; and that evidence must have been conveyed to him, either by natural signs, or by miracles. Mere declaration, mere assertion, might have been *explanatory*, but it never could have served the purpose of evidence. Now, we are not left to conjecture which mode of instruction was employed. He was instructed by Figures; and the figures used were the visible objects of the creation by which he was surrounded. We read of him being placed amongst figurative trees; and we not only find two of them used by Divine Wisdom, in an especial manner, as instructors, but we see him, instantly on the conviction of sin arising, making use of another tree to cover himself with, the figurative name of which was *Repentance*. We are informed, that he gave names to the animals; and, immediately afterwards,

one of these creatures *verifies*, in the most awful manner, the aptness of the figurative name which Adam himself had given it! Is it reasonable to suppose, that he who *thus* acted, and was *thus* instructed, was guided by blind impulse in his proceedings; or that all the rest of nature, from which *such* lessons were extracted, was a sealed book to him? Nay, these lessons not only teach us, in the most irresistible manner, that nature was the book from which Adam was instructed, but they place, beyond a cavil, the nature of the instruction which was drawn from it, and the mode by which it was imparted. They establish, in the clearest manner, that, from the very beginning, the invisible things of God were preached by the visible.

In whatever aspect we view the situation of the first man, the truth of what has now been stated will receive additional confirmation. A creature, with reasoning powers such as he possessed, could not have been inactive; there must have been objects provided on which his faculties were to be exercised. But to what could they have been directed? If to the phenomena of nature, merely in a scientific point of view, the subject lacked interest. The garden, nay, the tree of life alone, brought forth every thing he required: he could apply his philosophical discoveries to no practically useful or interesting purpose. If he examined the same phenomena in a metaphysical spirit, he would only find reduplications of the same admirable contrivance—new proofs of an Almighty hand; a matter about which he was fully informed, and had



no difficulties or doubts to solve, for none had yet arisen. But, imagine it revealed to him, as the specimens of instruction already quoted show *it was most certainly revealed*, that the visible creation contained types, or figures, or illustrative emblems, of spiritual things,—of a creation, unseen to mortal eye, but revealed to the eye of faith in these emblems; and what a copious, what an endless subject, for inquiry and investigation, is opened up to him. It is not, as already noticed, at all necessary for us to know the extent to which he was enlightened in these matters; it is enough to ascertain that *this* was his employment—that *this* was the mode by which spiritual instruction was given him.

See, then, the creation framed; bearing evidence, in every feature, that this was the arena on which light was to be brought out of darkness, and the good severed from the evil. See the character of God, as good, shining in every part of the work; and behold man, placed in it, with an understanding fitted to comprehend it all, and the great question at issue. Observe, that, before him, good and evil, light and darkness, life and death, are placed: and behold him seduced to choose death rather than life, evil rather than good. The wiles of the enemy seem to be triumphant, and all the gracious purposes of heaven in the creation overthrown. But this cloud is introduced, this shadow intervenes, only to make the light shine more conspicuously—only to admit a more full display of the character of God, as the just God and the merciful: just, in the punish-

ment he inflicts on the seducer, by making his subtle dealing recoil on himself; and merciful, in the gracious promise of deliverance, through the seed of the woman.

If Adam had formerly been in any doubt, as to what light shining out of darkness meant, could he be so *now*? or could he for an instant doubt, that the gracious voice which he now heard pronouncing the blessing, was the same which said, Let there be light, and there was light? Or, could he hesitate to believe that the promise had been contemplated by Divine Wisdom, when he made the light to shine out of darkness? Let human ingenuity set itself to work; let the brightest intellects combine, to devise something to comfort the heart of the poor trembling rebel, when he was ejected from Eden. How miserably would the finest spun scheme, which talent and philosophy could frame, contrast with the support and consolation that would arise to his mind, when he reflected on the evidence contained in the creation, that THE PROMISE to bruise the head of the serpent had been the eternal purpose of the Son of God. He would feel assured that nothing could frustrate that purpose; and the assurance of this would be sufficient to strengthen his mind through the many years of toil and trouble which lay before him; yea, amply sufficient, when 'kept in memory,' to make him fear no evil, in that hour when dust was to return to dust, and the spirit to God who gave it.

Reader, reject all the puerile notions concerning the first Adam, imbibed in early youth; or the still

more serious errors regarding him, instilled by polemical discussion, rabbinical dotage, or philosophic foolery. He was a man as thou art; and if ever man required the hope of eternal life, and the faith of the Gospel to support him, amidst the evils and frailties of mortality, it was the man who brought death into the world—the curse and all its consequences. He was a reasonable being; and a faith, adequate to the trying circumstances in which, for 800 years, he had to witness the consequences of his rebellion, must have been one so convincing to his understanding as a man, as to have withstood all the suggestions of unbelief, and all the temptations of him who first withdrew him from his allegiance. Would a dark and unintelligible promise have done so? No. God has ever been light, and in him is no darkness at all; and we shall find reason, in the following chapters, to conclude, that although the path of the just has always been, and still is, shining more and more unto the perfect day, it was at all times distinctly defined, and gave hope, security, and peace to those who sought it.

## CHAPTER IV.

### LANGUAGE.

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IN the preceding chapters we have had occasion, more than once, to refer to the slender consideration which is generally given to the brief, but most interesting, facts which are recorded in the Bible concerning the early state and history of man. Perhaps, in nothing has this unjust and unphilosophical spirit been more manifested, than in regard to the subject of this chapter. Indeed, when due weight is given to a circumstance, in connexion with it, which we shall immediately bring under the notice of the reader, he will cease to find fault with us for treating with very little respect the current notions, whether learned or vulgar, on almost any part of the economy or history of the early ages of the world.

Many years have not elapsed since a Professor, of high philological character, published a work in two large volumes, the scope and design of which was to prove, that language had a very rude and imperfect origin: that it commenced in the reduplication of such sounds as, 'agg, agg,'—'wagg,

wagg;' and that, by degrees, as mankind emerged out of a state of barbarism, and their wants and employments multiplied, more euphonious and complicated sounds were added; or, as he was pleased to call it, were 'agged' to the pristine and primitive elements. The work was loudly lauded, and language was exhausted in finding terms to express the universal admiration which the learned philologist's 'waggery' excited. Seriously, the book was widely and extravagantly applauded.

Now, it certainly can excite no surprise, that an ingenious and amusing theory, however absurd, should have found a class of followers and admirers; but, that in a Christian country, where the Bible was in every person's hands, and generally acknowledged to be, at least, *respectable authority*; that no one should have been found bold enough to point out the utter inconsistency between such a theory and the facts recorded there, proves, most undeniably, how much less importance is attached to the plainest statements of Scripture, than to the wildest vagaries of that which is called genius amongst mankind. The truth seems to be, and it is a lamentable one, that the sneers of those who have gained a name for talent by affecting to despise the words of inspiration, and the cautions of those who will not admit that the Bible addresses itself to the understanding, make men shrink from the *weakness* of admitting its authority, or afraid to look into it for information, save through the spectacles of those who, in searching for mysteries, overlook the plainest facts.

Having based our inquiry on the irrefragable truth and certainty of every statement in the Sacred Records, and on their infinite superiority in point of authority, and in respect of satisfactory explanation, over every theory which ever has or ever will be broached,—we should not have thought it necessary to refer at all to the preceding theory concerning language, had it not furnished an instance, which almost every reader will at once appreciate, of the folly into which wisdom degenerates, when it attempts to penetrate the past or the future, without the aid of Revelation; and did it not serve as a useful warning against the fashionable philosophy of the day, in which man himself, with all his faculties, is viewed as a thing of spontaneous growth—a walking vegetable, an improved zoophyte, or, at best, a civilized ourang-outang.

Let us give these theorists the benefit of their suppositions for a moment. Suppose the vegetables or animals become men; and that all the operations of mother earth have reached the point where men remain men, and beasts continue beasts, without any chance of further metamorphoses—the vegetable is checked in its attempts to become a zoophyte; the zoophyte is ordered to remain on its native spot; the ass is warned that it will in vain strive to become a lion; and the ape, though within a step of humanity, is denied the faculty of speech. Men begin to walk abroad, proud of their pre-eminence over the other less fortunate natural productions. They discover that they can make a noise as well as the other animals; and of course the noises the

brutes make being the first sounds the men hear, they naturally begin to imitate them. Having sprung out of the earth at various places, they meet each other accidentally. The one wishes to tell the other that he saw a lion—he roars like one: there is no other way so easy, or so intelligible, of describing the creature which frightened him. Another has seen an ass, and accordingly brays, or a hog, and grunts. A third whistles like a bird, or chirps like a cricket—chatters like a monkey, or screams like a cockatoo. Thus language would become a compound of screaming, whistling, roaring, and grunting. The learned may write as long and as laboriously as they choose on the origin of speech; this is the *natural* origin of language amongst self-taught savages, destitute of revelation.

How beautifully does the scripture account of the origin of mankind contrast with a philosophy which admits of such objections as may thus be suggested. How satisfactorily does it account for the general resemblances, as well as for the endless variety, in language. Proceeding from one family,—the parents of which were placed on the earth, perfectly fitted in body and in mind for the situation they held in creation,—mankind, wherever they emigrated or spread abroad, carried knowledge and language with them. The changes on these were produced by time, by distance, and by differences of habits and situation; but were never sufficiently great to obliterate all traces of their common origin, and of a primeval intercommunity of ideas as well as of speech.



Still it may be argued, by those who contend for the savage-like simplicity of primeval language, that as speech was only required for expressing the *wants* of mankind,—when these wants, and consequently the arts, were few,—the vocabulary would be small, and the verbs scanty; and that this would be the case, even if the earth had originally been peopled in the manner recorded in the Bible. But what a miserable and sterile philosophy this is! As if man had been placed on the earth for no other purpose but to feed, at first, like the beasts that perish! Besides, if language had only been used to express wants, our first parents would have required no language in Eden, for there they had no wants! Such reasoners forget, too, that unless theology (in the proper sense of the word) be a thing of man's invention, which has grown up with the other wants and weaknesses of human nature, the knowledge of God and His worship must have been a matter of as much importance to the first man as to the last.

On applying to the source of all correct information on this matter, we receive it as conclusive as it is satisfactory. We find man in possession of this faculty as perfect as all the other *gifts* of Heaven to him were; so perfect, that he is fitted by it to hold converse with his Maker;—to manifest, in the use he made of it, when the woman was taken from his side, that he understood the purposes of Heaven in her formation;—to give names to all the animal creation;—to frame, with it, an artful palliation of his conduct in eating of the forbidden tree;—and, on his expulsion from Eden, to express, with it, his



belief in the nature of the promise, by giving a singularly prophetic name to the woman, because she was to be the mother of Him 'unto whom all were to live!'

These uses and applications of language by the first man, are indicative of anything rather than *sterility* in its composition; and are quite sufficient, could we ascertain nothing more respecting it, to corroborate the views already expressed, regarding the object and purpose of Heaven in placing man on the earth, as well as those regarding the extent of the instruction which Adam possessed in Divine things. But it so happens, that we are in possession of ample proof of what the language actually was, and of the subjects and objects to which it was peculiarly adapted. The proof of this is, fortunately, of a nature which no sophistry can undermine, and which it requires nothing but the exercise of ordinary reasoning powers and common sense to understand.

Amongst other applications of language, by our first parents, was that of giving proper names, accompanied by *reasons* for bestowing them. It surely requires no argument to demonstrate, that *the name* and *reason for bestowing it*, can correspond in no other language than that used by the person who gives the name. Now, what Adam did and said, is recorded in the language in which the name, and the reason of the name, correspond—the record, therefore, is written in the language he employed. It *can* be written in no other, otherwise the names, and the reason for them, could not agree, as they do, in every case.

This is so self-evident and plain, that illustrations or arguments run a risk of darkening it; nevertheless, lest we should appear to arrive at a conclusion too readily, in so knotty a point as the antediluvian language, we must attempt some exemplifications of it.

In the Gospel according to Matthew, (which it is agreed was first written in Hebrew, and then translated into Greek), when a Hebrew proper name occurs, given for a specific reason, the name itself is generally *translated*, before the reason for bestowing it can be explained. Thus, in the instance of the name Immanuel; before the Greeks could understand the cause of such a name being given, it was necessary to *translate* the name, and to tell what it meant, 'being interpreted.' If, therefore, the account of what Adam did, had been written by Moses in a language different from that which Adam himself used, he would have required to have translated the names, and to have added to each of them this note, 'which being interpreted into Hebrew, means' so and so. But Moses never required to add such a note, for this plain and obvious reason, that he wrote in the same language which Adam spoke. If Adam called the name of the woman 'Ishah,' because she was taken out of 'Ishi,' (man)—if he afterwards called her 'Hava,' because she was to be the mother of all 'Havai,' (living)—if Eve called her son 'Cain,' because she said 'Cainthi,' (I have gotten)—it is surely a waste of words to adduce any other proof that they used the language in which 'Ishi' means '*man*,'—Havai, '*living*,'—and Cainthi, '*I have gotten*.'

Having, thus, most incontrovertible evidence that the antediluvian records, as we have them in the Hebrew Bible, are written in the primeval language of the world, (or in a dialect of it so little changed, as to require no such explanatory notes about the giving of names, as were indispensable in those portions of the Scriptures which were written in a subsequently translated tongue), we shall now proceed to a more difficult part of the subject; that of endeavouring to convey, to those unacquainted with the original language of the Scriptures, some idea of the structure of that language, of its capabilities, and of the matters to which it was *peculiarly* applicable.

The chief difficulty here consists in this, that modern languages, European especially, possess almost none of that which was the very essence and excellence of the sacred tongue; so that we have to attempt to describe a quality in language not merely new to most of our readers, but for defining which there is almost a lack of terms in the English language, and for illustrating which there is a want of any property in modern speech to compare it with. In modern languages words are mere conventional sounds, of no importance in themselves, save that which custom gives them; and their meaning is often undergoing changes, through caprice, fashion, accident, or the gradual operation of time. Thus, '*piety*,' which at the time the English translation of the Bible was made, meant 'filial affection,' is now used to designate religious feelings generally; '*prevent*,' in the sense of going before; '*let*,' in the

sense of hinder, are now never used. No one would recognise in the ideas which are now attached to the words '*sanctify*,' '*sanctification*,' and '*saints*,' their primary and only proper meaning, *i. e.* 'separate,' 'separation,' and 'separated.' '*Virtue*' has undergone many strange mutations; '*faith*' no longer means 'belief upon evidence,' but a blind assent without it to something inexplicable; '*church*' does not now mean the congregation, but the house in which they assemble. The catalogue of such mutations is endless; and the cause of them all is to be traced to that property in modern language which is so well described by Shakspeare, where he says, 'The rose by any other name would smell as sweet.' This ductility, or versatility, in modern languages, may have its advantages; but it has one grievous and vexatious disadvantage in regard to sacred matters, that of rendering vague and indefinable things that were, at one time, of a fixed and determinate and simple signification.

It is scarcely possible to imagine any medium for expressing ideas more diametrically opposed to such flexibility, than the language in which Adam spoke and Moses wrote. It may appear, at first, almost incredible, to any one merely acquainted with language as it now is, composed of arbitrary syllables and sounds,—but it may be stated, in perfect consistency with all that we now can learn of the sacred language in its early vigour,—that it must have been a most difficult task to use a word in a perverted sense; in fact, the meaning could not be changed without altering the word itself. A circumstance

familiar to every one will show the truth of this. Whenever, at any period, the worship of *Jehovah* was departed from, *the name* was laid aside, and some other, such as Baal, substituted. Owing to the indeterminate nature of modern language, there may be fifty different kinds of worship, and as many contradictory and opposing ideas concerning *the object* of that worship, yet all of them are called worshipping *the Lord*. It could not have been so of old. The meaning inherent in, and inseparable from, the word *Jehovah*, was so determinate, that it was impossible for the worshipper to retain the name and at the same time change his opinions in religious matters. Hence, when Moses is about to go to the Israelites in Egypt, he desires to know *the name* of the God who sent him. Pharaoh worshipped God as well as the Israelites; but he said, 'Who is *Jehovah*, that I should obey him?' He did not question the mission of Moses and Aaron, or deny that some great power enabled them to work miracles; but he did not recognise or acknowledge in that name the unchangeable attributes of the God of the whole earth. He did not say, 'I confess *Jehovah* as well as you, although I do not think he sent you.' He said, '*Who* is *Jehovah*?' The Israelites put no such question: the name conveyed to them the attributes of the God of their fathers, 'and they bowed the head and worshipped.'

The cause of this inflexibility in the sacred language, this strict adherence to *truth*, is owing to a singular and beautiful provision in its construction; that of every word being referable to one or other of

a number of primitive words or roots, the original ideas connected with which were simple, clear, and unchangeable. As the branch clearly indicated, by its construction, the root from whence it sprung, it would, while the language was *alive*, have been as impossible to transfer a word to a wrong stock, as to have cut off a branch from a living tree and to have placed it on one of a different species, without having the forgery instantly detected. The language has lain so long *dead*, that such transferences are now not so easily traced; and, no doubt, many a serious one has been committed by blundering as well as by wicked hands. Still, the providence of God has so wonderfully converted rabbinical superstition into a means of preservation, that, if we cannot at all times trace a word back to its source, it can be done, and has been done, in a sufficient number of cases, to place beyond a doubt the existence of this quality and property in the language, at the time the Scriptures were penned: in a sufficient number of cases, too, to place the general scope, meaning, and design of the facts recorded equally beyond cavil; excepting on the part of those who try to hide their ignorance of the language, under affected admiration of Butler's profane and silly sneer at 'Hebrew roots' in 'barren ground.' It may be worth the consideration of such cavillers, whether the barrenness of the ground may not be one cause why the truths of the Scriptures, which have all sprung from Hebrew roots, so seldom flourish in the fields of philosophy. It was no barren ground which produced the history of Joseph, the Psalms, and the Prophets; and the

wilderness of the gentile world never became a fruitful field, until the living waters broke through the sealed fountain of the Jewish church, which they had so long nourished, and went out from Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the earth.

It will naturally occur to every reader, that a language, such as we have been endeavouring to describe, could not have had a barbarous or rude origin; it could not have sprung from nouns or names of things capriciously bestowed. Accordingly we find, on tracing the words of the primeval language to their roots or originals, that these roots were *verbs of action*; and, what is of no small interest and importance in reference to our present enquiry, these active verbs were evidently drawn from operations and appearances in nature, such as shooting forth, stretching out, shining, burning, increasing, diminishing, circling, rolling, and others of the same class.

We cannot too strenuously urge attention to these elements, out of which the primeval language was formed; as it will greatly conduce to a just appreciation of the modes of instruction which naturally arose out of such a form of speech, or were fitly and beautifully engrafted on it. And if due consideration be given to the circumstances in which the first man was placed, it will be abundantly evident that the origin we have ascribed to language is not only the natural one, but is the *only one* from which a primitive language could have been drawn, by which it was possible for him to express the feelings or emotions of his mind. To give utterance to

these emotions would be one of the first applications he would make of language. Now, in doing so, he could not use intelligibly, a mere arbitrary sound ; that sound, to be intelligible, must have been connected or associated with some previously understood matter or thing. This would have been equally requisite, whether the language came by intuition or by revelation. A familiar example will enforce this better than argument. He wished to express '*happiness*.' Now, unless his Maker had told him that, when he was happy, he was to use such or such a word—a supposition too absurd to be entertained for a moment—how could he devise a mode of giving utterance to such a feeling, such utterance as would have been understood by his 'helpmeet?' In no possible way but by borrowing a figure from the appearances or operations of nature, such as the springing forth of light. His descendants now use arbitrary sounds to express feelings or *invisible things*, because *custom* has affixed a meaning to those sounds ; but, at the period of which we write, there was, of course, no *previous* use, no precedent to give a key to the expression employed. In short, the more closely the subject is investigated and thought of, the more evident it will appear, that the visible objects and operations of nature must have furnished the elements of language ; and that the figurative use of the elements, so obtained, was the most natural, the most beautiful, and the most forcible mode of expressing invisible things, whether those pertaining to the human mind or to the spiritual creation.



We had previously ascertained, from the proper names and their meanings, that the language in which the Inspired Record of the Antediluvian world is written, was essentially the language used by Adam himself. We have now been considering an additional confirmation of this, in the correspondence between the structure of that language and the mode in which nature itself teaches us, he would most readily apply it to the expression of his mental or religious feelings or ideas. But there is a more remarkable circumstance than either of these, which still remains to be noticed, and one which, above all, we are anxious to convey some idea of to the reader who is unacquainted with the structure of the sacred language.

This circumstance, of much importance, and often to be referred to in the course of our inquiry, is the curious mode in which nouns or names of things are derived from the primitive verbs, to which we have already alluded, and the still more singular manner in which they are applied to natural objects.

Let us first, by an example, endeavour to convey some idea of the highly philosophic and forcible mode by which *derivatives* clearly proved the parent stock from whence they came, and carried a meaning with them which it was impossible to pervert or misunderstand, so long as *the root* was known. In the instance we are now about to give, will also be seen a confirmation of what has been stated, respecting the primary *ideas* or *verbs* having sprung from the operations of nature, as well as an illus-

tration of the aptitude of the sacred language to teach by metaphor.

Adam was told that 'in *the sweat* of his face he was to eat bread.' Now, although he had never heard the word translated '*sweat*' before, he would at once perceive its meaning. The primary idea or verb from which it is derived, is the compressive power in nature by which the sap is driven through trees, and vegetation generally carried on. But the construction of the derivative noun, implying, that it was to be through constraint, as if a heavy burden were laid on, he learned from this that it was to be accompanied by much travail. *Naturally*, then, the word translated *sweat*, was associated in the early language with ideas of bodily labour and fatigue—*metaphorically*, it expressed in that language mental disquietude, arising from something heavy on the mind; and, *theologically*, it came to be applied to the vanities, idolatries, and laborious exercises by which mankind corrupted the truth of God, and made it a source of disquiet to the mind instead of comfort.

This instance may, in some degree, though feebly, serve to convey an impression of the expressive power implanted in early language by the connexion which always subsisted between the roots and the branches, however extended or spread out—of the difficulty of corrupting *ideas* without altering or wholly removing *words*—of the adaptation of the primitive language to metaphorical illustration—and of the tendency it would beget, in those who used it, to draw figurative lessons from the objects

and operations in nature: 'to find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing.'

But, as already noticed, the application of words, so derived, as *names to natural objects*, is, perhaps, the most singular trait in the sacred language: and it is an exceedingly curious and interesting one, when we remember that 'God brought every beast of the field and every fowl of the air unto Adam, to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature *that was the name thereof*.'

Greatly as the key to these names has been lost, impossible as it is found in many cases to trace them to their originals, the bestowal of them, according to some fixed plan of a metaphorical nature, is abundantly evident. We shall afterwards have occasion to notice particularly the surprising application of these animal forms to doctrinal purposes; at present we shall only entreat the reader to consider what an incomparably superior *power* the nouns or names in such a language would possess, for metaphorical purposes, over what they possibly can do in any language where they are merely arbitrary and not derivative; at least not so distinctly derivative as to carry their meaning in their sound. Take for instance the word '*serpent*;' we connect ideas of subtilty with it, from its appearance and from its history. Those who understood the sacred language, had not only the same circumstances associated with it in their minds, but the name '*nahash*,' given to it by Adam, intimated that it was the very

impersonation of subtilty and craft, united with superior wisdom and supernatural intelligence.

We should here close our remarks on early language; but there is a part of the subject which, although not immediately affecting our enquiry, is too interesting, and has occasioned too much controversy, to be passed over unnoticed; that is, the probable period of the introduction of LETTERS, or characters representing words. We must be brief on this, for we have already exceeded the limits designed for this part of our enquiry, important as it is.

Much argument has been expended on this subject; there are two circumstances which have been but little observed. The reader who has gone along with us, in the preceding remarks, will merely require to be reminded of them in order to come to a satisfactory conclusion.

In the first place, has the difficulty, if not impossibility, of creating signs to represent a progressive language, such as we have attempted to describe, has the difficulty of this, after the language *has progressed* for many ages, received that consideration which it deserves? We think it has not; and the more the intricacy and difficulty of fixing on signs, suited to represent the varied roots and branches of the sacred language, is reflected on, the more apparent will *the improbability* (to use the lightest term) appear of it having been the work of Moses, or of any man, inspired or uninspired. A language without signs can scarcely be methodical or regular in its construction. A branchial or derivative language without signs is all but impossible; and a derivative

language, existing and branching out for thousands of years without signs, and *then* having them so devised as to suit every root or branch pertaining to it, is past the comprehension or belief of any rational being.

In the second place, there is not a reader of the Bible, however unacquainted with the language in which it was originally written, who is not aware of the astonishing effect of the introduction, or of the change of *one letter* in the word. The instance of the word Abram will suffice. Abram signifies the 'high or mighty Father;' one letter introduced so as to change it to Abraham, altered the meaning to 'the Father of many nations.' *The same power* in individual letters existed in the time of Adam, as the instances formerly quoted prove. Could the language have possessed such a property without visible signs? The thing is *impossible*. A sound could not have accomplished it; for the same letter, according to its position or connexion, produced very different effects. These effects were produced by *single consonants*, not by *syllables* or sounds. A language, the single letters or consonants of which possessing such power, without signs for such consonants, is an absurdity, which only reluctance to own that language, in all its parts, was the gift of God, would ever have dignified even by the name of a supposition.

Unless, therefore, we are prepared to admit the most glaring difficulties and absurdities, we are driven to the conclusion, that language, in its signs as well as its sounds, was the gift of God to Adam—

a gift, which even the glimpses we can now obtain of it, prove to have been worthy of the source from which it came. It bears the marks of having been fitted to convey to man, at the first, the clearest conceptions of the powers, properties, laws, and operations, by which the Former of all things ordained that the universe should be sustained;—to enable him, from them, metaphorically, to express the passions, emotions, and feelings of his own mind and affections—and, from them, to understand, so far as finite capacity could do, the spiritual operations of God's greater creation, of which the visible universe was a figure. It appears, also, to have possessed, in a most remarkable manner, the property of giving immutability to the *ideas* or *opinions* expressed by it—so far at least as to prevent a change of opinion without a change of language; and was thus the proper, the Divine vehicle for expressing and perpetuating *the Truth of God*: and the names or nouns formed of its elements seemed, most miraculously, framed for rendering every object, animate or inanimate, to which they were applied, the bearer of some figurative or prophetic lesson.

That language, darkened and disfigured, alas! by rabbinical puerilities and heathen attempts to twist it to the rules of more worldly tongues, we still have in our hands—it still retains traces of its Divine origin, sufficiently plain to commend itself to the understanding of every one who is bold enough to refuse to look at Divine Truths through the mists of Paganism, or to estimate Revelation by the criterion of Philosophy.

## CHAPTER V.

### HIEROGLYPHICS.

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THE preceding discussions have been gone through, not for the purpose of establishing certain abstract theories in regard to creation, to the first man, and to language, but to correct the current erroneous notions respecting these matters, by giving due weight to the inspired record; and so pave the way for a more just estimate of the curious and interesting subjects before us. It is scarcely necessary to say, to such readers as have followed us thus far in the enquiry, that we are disposed to take a very different view of the origin and design of hieroglyphic representation, from that which is generally received in the world, or countenanced by the learned. We shall not, therefore, waste our limited space in combating the current opinions regarding hieroglyphics, as having been antecedent to or the first rude attempts at letters; for unless our premises have been unfounded, and our deductions false, language and its signs must have existed long before any of the hieroglyphics, still extant, were portrayed. Besides, it is perfectly plain that if hieroglyphics

had been the rude and imperfect precursors of letters, they would have gone into disuse on the appearance of the more improved method of pourtraying ideas, or have remained in use for a time only amongst the illiterate; whereas we know that they continued in use long after letters are, by all, acknowledged to have been introduced, and that not amongst the vulgar, but amongst the most learned class of the community, the priests. Rejecting such theories as unsatisfactory, and incompatible with established and incontrovertible facts, let us enquire whether a more truly philosophical and satisfactory origin is not to be found for them, in the aptitude of the mind of man to receive instruction by means of allegory; and, whether the early existence of such figurative representations, be not a convincing proof that the principles contended for, in the preceding chapters, are well founded.

We shall in vain attempt to take a just view of this subject, if we do not keep in mind the widely different nature of the thoughts and employments of mankind, in the primeval ages of the world, from what they have become in a more artificial state of society and manners. We must also remember, that a great change has taken place in this respect since 'the Desire of all nations' has come; and since the revelations from heaven have assumed the aspect of *a finished testimony* regarding a matter *that has been perfected*, instead of all being of a prospective and expectant nature. At the same time, although this remarkable change has taken place, there has, in every age, been *this* intercommunity of thought—



there has always been a something concerning the unseen world ('the world to come, whereof we speak,') resting on *testimony*. This something unseen, and therefore a matter of faith and hope, has at all times been of equal importance to man. He would just have as many and as anxious thoughts about it in the first century of the world, as he now can have, when 'the world is grown old;' and it was just as necessary that he should be instructed regarding it then as now. But the modes of instruction he would require, when every thing was prospective, would, as well as his thoughts concerning it, be quite different from what they are, now that 'the good thing promised to the fathers hath been fulfilled to their children.'

Very different was 'the instruction in righteousness' required then from what is now given. '*We all with open face*' are called to look on that which was *manifested*. *They* all, as well as Moses, looked and spoke through a veil. We behold the bow in the cloud as in the clear shining *after* rain—they were *under* the cloud and *in* the sea. The mode of instruction was, therefore, suited to those who were in a state of expectation, and it was made not only suitable to them, but subservient to the faith which was afterwards to be revealed.

It ought not to be objected to such quotations, that they are more immediately applied by the Apostle to Moses. For we shall find, as we proceed, that they are equally applicable to all the Old Testament dispensation—there being much more of the Mosaic system, not of Moses, but of *the Fathers*,

than is generally attended to. In Moses it was more fully developed—it received a more distinct form as a law—but the elements or ‘rudiments of *the world*,’ (that is, EXTERNAL FORMS) were in conformity with the Divine economy regarding man, *of necessity*, the elements of teaching *until* the seed came to whom the promises were made.

This is a point of the highest importance, for, without due attention to it, all the primeval economy will appear mysterious and unmeaning. Man by his unbelief and disobedience had brought darkness over all his prospects. God promised to bring light out of that darkness, to turn the evil into good, to cause mercy to rejoice over judgment, and to bring down the craft of the enemy upon his own head; making Satan’s attempt to frustrate the designs of God the mean of accomplishing those glorious and god-like purposes. The promise of this was to be the ground of the faith and hope of Adam and his sons for many generations. But he and they, during the period of expectancy, were, one after another, to return to dust without seeing the promise fulfilled. During all that time they would have the same wiles of the Devil to contend against, which had succeeded in ejecting them from Paradise. How was the promise to be made a constant antidote to these wiles—a never-failing ground or confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen? By being progressively strengthened and confirmed. But how could a thing only in expectation be strengthened in the mind? Only by new evidence regarding it being afforded. And

in what way could evidence respecting a future event be given? In no way but by some concatenation of figures, circumstances, or events, so surprisingly fitting into each other, as to carry conviction to the mind that they all proceeded from the same source, and all indicated the power, as well as the intention, of the Promiser to fulfil what he had said.

It must occur to every reader, that no figure, circumstance, or event, could be made instructive or useful, towards such a purpose, without *previous instruction*; without some data to proceed upon, some principle to judge by, some foundation laid in the mind, to which the links of evidence could be attached. We have already seen that where there was the exercise of *faith*, there would always be a danger of *doubt* creeping in and undermining it; and if Satan succeeded in instilling unbelief in Paradise, he was likely to have a much easier task in a sinful world. Had the promise, concerning the seed of the woman, been unconnected in the mind with circumstances calculated to enforce and explain it, it is very difficult to imagine how it could so enlighten the understanding (which '*the secret of the Lord*' always does) as to defend the conscience against despair and unbelief. *In itself* it was both vague and oracular; but it was surrounded by circumstances which fitted it for *an antidote* to the curse, much better than *an explicit promise*, unattended by such circumstances, could have done. An explicit promise might have been undermined, or rendered ineffectual, as a ground of hope, in the same way in which an explicit threatening had

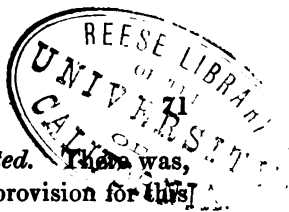
already been disregarded; but being made *figurative*, it took great force and meaning from the previous instruction Adam had received; and instead of getting weaker as it grew older, it gained fresh accessions of strength, as time rolled on, and figure upon figure, as well as precept upon precept, were added for its confirmation.

We do not, at present, propose to enquire what the ideas were which Adam, from his previous *education*, would connect with the words of the promise. These may be better understood when we come to the investigation of the situation of his family, after their ejection from Eden. At present, we wish only to direct attention to the number of *figures* which are contained in the short sentence, emphatically called, 'the Promise.' The serpent and the seed of the serpent, the woman and the seed of the woman, were all figurative; for enmity between a brute and a human creature, or between the devil personally and the woman personally, is an interpretation too absurd to be seriously entertained. 'Bruising' is figuratively used, and 'head' and 'heel' are metaphorical. Here was a promise figuratively given, prepared for by figurative teaching, and followed up by figurative confirmations. Suppose that, instead of this mode of giving and strengthening it, the promise had been plainly spoken, it must be evident that nothing could afterwards have been done to vindicate it, or to prevent it from being corrupted, but to repeat it or fulfil it. Repetition would not, in such a case, have been confirmation; for the new promise would

have been liable to as many objections as the old; and the fulfilment of it, while the first race of patriarchs were still alive, would have deprived it, as an article of faith, of all that wonderful body of evidence regarding it, the collection of which into the Scriptures so clearly proved it to have been no cunningly devised fable.

The figures by which it was subsequently strengthened were of various kinds. Persons appeared in typical characters. Events of a miraculous and typical nature were brought to pass. Ordinances, plainly of a typical nature, such as sacrifice, were instituted. These three modes of illustration have received so much attention, and have been so generally appreciated, that it is not necessary to dwell upon them here. The mode of illustration which has not received the same degree of attention, but which served the purpose of explanation and elucidation, more perhaps than any of the others, was that of figurative language accompanied by certain forms or combination of forms, in other words **HIEROGLYPHICS.**

The excellence of this mode of instruction and illustration lay in the figurative structure of the language which accompanied it. We have already seen that the primitive language was pre-eminently so, and that its original roots, as well as many of its most striking illustrations, were drawn from remarkable appearances and operations in nature. But there were some of these appearances and operations which could not be portrayed. The light, for instance, that first and finest figure in the crea-



tion, could not have been *represented*. There was, therefore, a singular and beautiful provision for this *deficiency* (if the term can be used in reference to a metaphor so pure and perfect), which lay in the application of names to natural objects that could be portrayed, by which they were rendered fit emblems, both of the natural appearances and of the spiritual works which they illustrated. Hence the picture of an animal or vegetable, or any other object, or combination of objects, stood for a representation, not of the object itself, but of the metaphor, idea, opinion, or doctrine, couched under the name or combination of names; and the introduction of the same *figures* or emblems in discourse, gave astonishing force to the language. To this cause the sacred language owes much of its elegance; and it is astonishing how much modern language is indebted to the wrecks of this beautiful peculiarity in early language which have floated down to it.

It is very generally supposed, but the supposition is erroneous, that metaphor in the Eastern languages, where it still abounds, is owing to the glowing imaginations and hyperbolical and high-flown ideas incidental to a warm climate and luxurious customs. To this source many have not scrupled to refer the noblest effusions of the sacred poets. No idea can be more wide of the truth—nor any one more calculated to darken and degrade the Scriptures. Metaphorical construction of language is a sign of *antiquity*, not of *clime* (witness the Celtic and other tongues); and the cause of so much metaphor being still found in Eastern tongues, is

because, in their construction, as well as in many of their words, they retain a similarity to the parent stock from which all language sprung; and have not become such a combination of mere arbitrary sounds, as those tongues which have descended to Europe through the puddle of Greek and Roman literature. Hence the exceeding beauty of the images in the Eastern tongues, borrowed from flowers, from birds, and other natural objects. The name of the object presented, portrayed, or referred to, is so full of meaning, that whether it be actually brought into view, depicted, or alluded to, it is introduced with an effect which an European can have, with his more matter-of-fact language, but a faint idea of. If an Eastern lover tell his passion, what epistle so full of meaning, or so well understood by his mistress, as a bouquet? and how carefully are the flowers arranged so that they may be read aright! Here we have the best illustration of *hieroglyphics*; and not a mere illustration, but a trace of the primitive connexion between language and nature, still lingering amid the wrecks of that speech in which God himself held converse with man.

It is pleasing to trace the same thing even in our own strangely compounded and ever varying language. What words could England's own Poet have put into the lips of Ophelia, so touching as 'There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; and there is pansies, that's for thoughts: there's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you, and here's some for me; there's a daisy; I would give you some

violets, but they withered all when my father died !' Now, expressive and touching as all the *hieroglyphics* are here, one of them (*rue*) has particular force, *from the name and the metaphorical use of it agreeing* ; and *this*, as already noticed, is one of the causes why the earliest application of natural objects for illustrative purposes was so forcible and expressive.

But it is not alone in such trivial matters that we see, in our own language, the beauty and the utility of hieroglyphics. Most of the figures by which the great truths of Revelation are familiarised to us, come from this source. We have already frequently referred to that universal hieroglyphic, the light. What ideas do we entertain of truth so forcible as those which that emblem conveys to us ? What *words* can speak so beautifully and so intelligibly as that figure ? What account can we give of purification, that the emblem of *water* does not far excel ? How can we so fearfully portray trial, as by *fire*,—so beautifully illustrate innocence, as by *a lamb*,—affection, as by *a dove* ? Or, what laboured preaching could so speak to the heart of the weary, as this figure, 'I am *the Bread of Life* ?' Now if these figures are so expressive to us, even in a language in which 'any other names' or sounds would just have done as well, what power and expression must such figures and *hieroglyphics* (for the lamb, the dove, and the bread are all hieroglyphics), what force must they have had, when language itself lent its figurative aid to the allegory ? For instance, we own the aptness of the emblem of the lamb, because



of the sportive innocence which appears about it ; but what a force was given to the emblem, when it was brought to the altar by a worshipper, who was taught to give it the name of *Seh*, this is He, or this is the substitute? We recognize the dove as a proper emblem of the Spirit, because the fruit of the Spirit is love ; but how much was the aptness of the figure enhanced, when the bird was known by the name (which Adam, with the approbation of God, bestowed upon it) *Jonah*, rest and peace ?

Before, then, proceeding to consider, in the next chapter, the immediate use after the fall of hieroglyphic forms, to preach the truths of God, let us reflect carefully on the evidence we have obtained, that the language in which the first revelations from heaven to man were made, was essentially allegorical ; that it was not only drawn from the great operations of nature, in its primary elements, and so fitted to convey by analogy ideas of the great spiritual works of God, which could not otherwise have been made intelligible to flesh and blood ; but that, in its application to *the objects* with which nature was filled, there seems to have been a constant eye to the illustration of the same subjects ; and names given to the objects, expressive not only of their natural qualities and uses, but of their use and meaning as *illustrators of Divine things*. In short, creation seems to have been looked upon as one great temple, filled with objects and guided by laws entirely of an *illustrative* nature ; indicative of some settled purpose, on the part of their Creator, to employ these objects and ordinances to teach,

preach, and illustrate heavenly truth; and they appear to have been looked at, or to have been considered worthy attention, in no respect but as contributing to this grand purpose. Thus, the objects themselves, or representations of them, were the best *texts* that could be employed to preach the doctrines of the kingdom of heaven. In this manner, as we shall proceed to consider in the next chapter, these representations, figures, or texts were used in the earliest worship of the world. Thus, they found a place in the tabernacle and in the temple. Thus, prophecy became filled with images borrowed from them. Thus, without a parable or allegory, drawn from these very works, our Lord himself never spake of the kingdom of heaven; and thus, little as it may now be attended to, all those beautiful similes, figures, and allegories, by which truth is conveyed to us, in the pages of the Divine Word, had their origin in the inexhaustible store of *hieroglyphics*, which Divine Wisdom connected, from the first, with that language in which testimony was to be borne to the unsearchable riches of Christ.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CHERUBIM.

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WE have endeavoured, in the preceding chapters, from the narrative given by Moses of creation-week, from the brief but interesting notices which are recorded concerning man in Eden, and from various circumstances in the structure of ancient as well as modern languages, to gain some insight into the cause of the prevalence of metaphor and of allegory, in all the early revelations made to man. However imperfectly we may have succeeded in, what all our readers will grant is not an easy task,—combating early impressions, and reasoning against the current of opinion, in matters whereof many *notions* have been formed, because *the facts* regarding them have been but little attended to; we feel perfectly satisfied that what our arguments may fail at first to effect, a second consideration of them will accomplish, with many readers. Whoever so far adopts the principles contended for, as to try and to compare patiently, from time to time, as questions arise to his mind, the answers *they* afford with the solu-

tions given, by any other process of reasoning, to the *mysteries* or *figures* with which the Divine Economy abounds, will obtain, as he proceeds, confirmation far stronger than any language we can use. As we advanced in our enquiry, we found a solution to the abundance of these figures in their admirable adaptation, as a mode of instruction, to the faculties of man ; in their fitness for a testimony concerning things which were of a future or prospective nature ; and we were prepared to find natural objects used allegorically, to illustrate Divine truths, from the connexion subsisting between these objects and the language given to man. Accordingly, the first man is introduced to our notice as placed amongst *emblems* ; and as giving such emblematical names to natural objects, as clearly indicated a just perception of the good and the evil,—of the truth and the lie. We have seen him endued with the spirit of prophecy ; and we beheld him, after his transgression, comforted and supported by a promise, couched in the language of allegory and of figure. We have now to follow him, on his ejection from Paradise, to a SCENE which CONFIRMS, in a more striking manner than any reasoning we can employ, the view we have taken of the instruction he had previously received. At the same place, also, we obtain the most satisfactory evidence, that it was by means of hieroglyphics that the truths of God were from the first preached to mankind.

It is narrated in Genesis iii. 24, that when God 'drove out the man, he placed cherubim at the east end of the garden of Eden, and a flaming

sword turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life.'

The vulgar idea connected with this passage being, that God placed *angels*, bearing bright or burning weapons, to *guard* the tree,—we shall be pardoned offering one or two remarks on some inadvertencies in the translation, which have partly contributed to this absurd notion. We shall be borne out in the criticisms by every Hebrew lexicon.

The word translated '*placed*,' is literally to 'dwell as in a tabernacle—to inhabit.' The word '*cherubim*' has, in the original, the definite article '*the*' before it. '*Sword*' is introduced, while no such weapon as a sword had yet been known: the phrase is 'the fire of wrath.' A sword being the instrument of wrath, had afterwards the name of *wrath* applied to it; but in this place the primary idea of the word should be used, because the object to which it was secondarily applied was then unknown. Besides, here, if the word meant sword, the phrase would literally be 'the fire of sword,' which is absurd. '*Turning every way*' is the *same word* which the translators render in Ezekiel, chapter i., 'infolding itself;' and '*keep*,' although properly translated, does not, in the original, mean here to *guard*, but to *keep*, in the sense of *observe*; in the same sense in which it is used in the phrase 'to *keep* the commandments of the Lord.'

Had the translators of the English Bible, then, not been misled by some idea about *a guard around the tree*, they would have rendered the verse thus: 'So he drave out the man. And he inhabited (or

dwelt between) THE cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and the fire of wrath (or fierce fire) infolding itself to preserve inviolate the way of the tree of life.'

Here is A MEMORIAL set up at Eden; something to keep or preserve inviolate the way of the Lord; for 'the way of the Tree of Life' has ever been the way of the Lord:—*that* memorial is called THE CHERUBIM.

There cannot be found a more glaring instance of the confusion, perplexity, and obscurity, which arise from connecting *unauthorised* ideas with a word, than in the case of the word *Cherubim*. From the definite article having been frequently dropped in our translation; from its plural termination (*im*) seeming to the ear to give it some connexion with *seraphim*; and from a too great readiness to adopt *vague* notions respecting what are called *mysteries*, almost every reader of the Bible thinks that the cherubim were what we call cherubs or *angels*. *For such a notion there is not the smallest foundation in the Scriptures.*

The first reference to *the* cherubim is in the passage already referred to in Genesis. The second is, where Moses is instructed to make it or them of the gold of the mercy-seat, and to portray them on the veil; and the form of them seems to have been understood, for he is merely instructed to frame them, but without any description of the form; *the* cherubim being something definite and previously well known. Paul calls them *the* cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat. The third

reference to them by name is, where Solomon is instructed to frame others around the holiest of all ; besides those upon the mercy-seat, which were then carried into the temple. The fourth is in the 80th Psalm, where God is said to 'dwell between them.' The fifth reference, and it is accompanied by a most copious description of them, is in the visions of Ezekiel. And the sixth, although in it the name is not mentioned, yet the description corresponds so precisely with Ezekiel's vision, that no doubt is left of the identity,—is in the vision which John saw of 'the four living creatures around the throne and in the midst of the throne.'

Let it be observed then,—1st, That in the vision which Ezekiel saw of the spiritual temple, God appeared sitting above or between *four living creatures*, and that this prophet, who was also a *priest*, and had therefore access to the holy of holies, says, 'I knew that they were THE CHERUBIM.' 2nd, That John, in his vision of the sanctuary in heaven, sees 'in the midst of the throne (the mercy-seat) and round about the throne (the very situation of the golden cherubim on the ark), *four living creatures*;' and that these four were *the same* that Ezekiel saw, which he says were '*the cherubim*.' 3rd, That God is described as 'sitting between the cherubim,' in the worldly sanctuary, which throne or seat was 'above or upon the ark.' And 4th, That God inhabited, or dwelt between, *the cherubim* at the east of the garden of Eden. The coincidence between, and the concurrent testimony of, all these passages prove, that in every recognized

‘place which God did choose to place his name, or his worship there,’ *there* did he always appear, establishing THE SAME MEMORIAL, and countenancing it with his presence or voice. In Eden, he placed and inhabited the cherubim; in the tabernacle and in the temple, he dwelt between the cherubim; in the spiritual visions of the temple, he was seen between the cherubim; and in heaven itself, he is represented as sitting between the same forms. Wherever, therefore, we meet with this definite word, *the* cherubim, we must connect the same ideas, the same forms with it; and wherever we have descriptions of these forms, they are just so many illustrations to us, so many explanations, of THE THRONE, wherever it was set; whether in Eden, in the tabernacle, in the temple, or in heaven itself. That throne was, like him who sat on it, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

The most particular description of this ‘dwelling place of the Most High,’ is given by Ezekiel; and in addition to what has already been noticed, the introduction to his vision seems most remarkably to identify what he saw, with what was seen at Eden. There was, first, a brightness; then ‘a fire infolding itself,’ corresponding precisely with the fire infolding itself, or turning every way, at Eden. In the midst of that fire the cherubim appeared. These cherubim in the fire were four living creatures; and we entreat the reader to reflect one moment on the circumstance of Adam having given *names* to the animal creation, and then to notice that THE MEMORIAL set up before him to ‘keep the way of



the tree of life,' was composed of *a combination of some of those animal forms to which he had previously given names full of symbolical meaning.*

We feel satisfied that there is not one, who allows this most wonderful circumstance, attending the early worship of the world, to have its due weight, but will be constrained to admit that there are many things in these 'ancient matters,' deserving much more of our attention, on whom the ends of the world have come, than has generally been given to them. Even could we obtain no key to such marvels, the very circumstance of finding the emblems at Eden and those in the temple to have been the same, might well make us pause, when disposed to talk lightly of the sacred institutions of an early world.

An investigation into such references to these symbols, as serve to determine the ideas attached to them by the worshippers of old, can be entered upon more appropriately afterwards. At present we are desirous rather to direct the reader's attention to *the identity* of the Edenic emblems with those subsequently established in the church; to the fitness of such *hieroglyphics* to convey the truths of God to the expectant believer; and to the corroboration which the early use of such symbols affords, of what has been adduced in the previous chapters.

If any further proof of the identity of the symbols, beyond those already adduced, were required, it is found in Ezekiel xxviii. 13, 14. 'Thou hast been *in Eden*, the garden of God; thou

art the *anointed cherub* that covereth; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.' The fitness of the emblem must have been most wonderful, when to that same anointed cherub it is said, 'Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.' And what more conclusive proof that the language of Eden was *perfect*, than that it furnished a key to an emblem which was the *sum* of wisdom and of beauty?

To the possessor of an arbitrary language, it appears almost incomprehensible how a hieroglyph, composed of a lion, an eagle, an ox, and a man, should have been called the perfection of wisdom and of beauty; yet, there cannot be a doubt, from various references, to be afterwards noticed, as well as from the passage in which these epithets occur, and from that hieroglyph being made the attendant of the Almighty in his revelations to man, that the perfection of wisdom and knowledge was conveyed, under that combination of forms, to the early worshippers. How figurative and expressive then must that language have been, which supplied names for these animal forms so highly metaphorical, as that a combination of them should be 'full of wisdom.'

Had the cherubic forms been representations of, or actual angels, they could not have been called the sum and perfection of wisdom; for 'the heavens are not clean in his sight, and his angels he chargeth with folly:' neither would they have included such figures as the lion and the ox, for no forms were less calculated to convey ideas of celestial beings.

They could not have been representations of the Deity, for they are described in Revelation iv. 5, as 'falling down, and worshipping Him that sat on the throne.' They could not have represented the elements of the material world, for they form the throne of Him 'whom the heaven, even the heaven of heavens cannot contain;' how much less the material elements of the lower world, or of the first heaven around it.

The investigations in which we have been engaged, lead us to view this singular combination of animal forms, as *hieroglyphical*; as conveying prophetic truths, by a combination of those objects to which Adam had given metaphorical names. This view we shall afterwards have CONFIRMED; and in that confirmation we shall obtain the most satisfactory corroboration of what has been stated regarding Adam's preparatory instruction. We shall find it called by an inspired writer, 'The GREAT *mystery*, or FIGURE of *godliness*—God (to be) manifested in the flesh; justified or declared the just one by the Spirit; seen of angels; preached unto the gentiles; believed on in the world; received up into glory.'

In the body or society professing this truth, God has always *dwelt*; hence he dwelt between the cherubim, which preached it at Eden, in the tabernacle, in the temple, and in heaven.

It is not necessary for us at present to insist on this being *the translation* of the cherubic figures. It is sufficient, in the present stage of our enquiry, that their decidedly hieroglyphical or figurative

nature be attended to, and the aptness of the early language for translating such figures borne in mind. Whatever was the nature of the truth preached by these forms, it was intended to preserve or keep in memory the way of the tree of life; and it appeared in the midst of *fire*—that ordeal through which truth is to be brought, ‘tried like silver purified seven times.’ God promised to Adam that he was to put enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of ~~the~~ serpent; to divide between the light and between the darkness; and, along with that promise, a symbol is established at Eden, by which truth is represented as abiding the ordeal of fire. How true it is that God never left himself without witness:—but to estimate the extent and force of that witness or testimony, at the east of Eden, requires another chapter.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE FIRMAMENT.

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It is necessary, on opening this chapter, to recur to one of the axioms with which we set out, and to follow up, more closely than has yet been done, one of the conclusions to which it leads.

It was assumed, as almost, if not altogether, a self-evident truth, that the choice of form and arrangement in the visible creation, being wholly of Divine Will, and not resulting from any inherent property in matter, there must have been some reason, intention, and design for the creation appearing as we now see it.

Applying this axiom to the work of the fourth day, when God set the sun, moon, and stars, for SIGNS as well as for seasons, for days, and for years; there must have been some *design* in these heavenly bodies being so placed as we behold them.

Every right-thinking reader will readily admit, that these heavenly bodies were so placed, as not only to carry on uninterruptedly the great opera-

tions of nature, but also to show forth the glory of their Creator. And, as it was equally within the power of God to carry on the same operations by *any other* arrangement; the arrangement chosen must have been that which Divine Wisdom saw best calculated for showing forth the Divine glory.

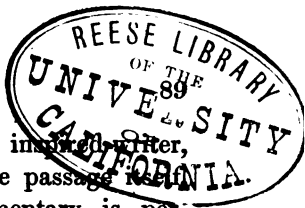
But wherein does the glory of God consist? If it be merely in splendour, in extent, in magnitude, or in beauty of arrangement—all these might have been equally shown by a different appearance from that which they now present. Glorious as they are, in all these respects, they might have been made still more amazing and wonderful, if admiration, wonder and astonishment had been all the emotions, in addition to thankfulness for their utility, which they were intended to produce in the minds of men. We shall never, in any degree, enter into the spirit of the Scripture allusions to the glory of God, if we suppose it to consist in visible splendour, or in states of existence calculated merely to excite our astonishment and admiration.

The glory of God consists in doing that which no intelligence, however high, save his own, could imagine—no power, save his own, however great, execute. As formerly noticed, we are so ignorant of the nature of the world of spirits, so unacquainted with the extent of their power and intelligence, that if we see nothing in the works of creation, save intelligence and power, we feel no conviction regarding their origin, save that they have proceeded from creatures greater in power and might than ourselves. Ere we behold, in any part of creation,

the glory of the God of the Scriptures—ere, indeed, we entertain the conviction that the works proceed from his hand—we must discern about them some characteristics *peculiar* to all *his* works—something which stamps undeniably the MIND from whence they have emanated.

The sweet Psalmist of Israel beheld the glory of HIS God in the heavens ; because he evidently READ in these heavens, something concerning that great work of redemption, which distinguished Jehovah from all other Gods. So often as he looked to the firmament, this great work was brought to his memory. ‘When I behold,’ he says, ‘thy heavens on high ; the firmament, the work of thy fingers ; the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, or set in order ; what is man, that *thus* thou rememberest him ; the son of man, that *thus* thou visitest him ?’ It seems to have been the discovery of this which made him preface his subject with these remarkable words : ‘How excellent, Jehovah, our Lord, is thy name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory *over*, or around, the heavens ?’

Lest those who have been accustomed to think of no glory about the firmament but that which appertains to its splendour, should judge that we have at all *strained* the language of the Psalmist, in the 8th psalm, to a contemplation of the heavens beyond the meaning usually given to the passage, that of *contrasting* the brilliancy and immensity of the heavenly bodies with the lowly appearance of man, ‘who is a worm,’—we proceed to another passage, from the same inspired pen, which fortunately has



been so commented on by another inspired writer, *as to set the question at rest!* The passage itself taken in connexion with the commentary, is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable which the Bible contains, in reference to the *publicity* which God gave to his purposes of mercy from the very beginning.

The 19th psalm, now referred to, opens with these words, 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork.' Had the Psalmist paused here, these words might have been construed in a sense as vague as is generally ascribed to the 8th psalm: but he thus proceeds, 'day unto day *uttereth* SPEECH, and night unto night *sheweth* KNOWLEDGE.' Had he dropped the subject even here, there might have been some pretext for affirming, that he had no more specific meaning, than that the speech of day and night was, 'the hand that made us is powerful,' or perhaps 'divine.' But, as if to frustrate all attempts to give his assertions any such vague meaning, he adds, 'there is no speech nor language where THEIR VOICE is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and THEIR WORDS to the end of the world.'

The use made, and the explanation given, of this noble passage by the apostle Paul, afford infallible elucidations of the nature of THE GLORY which the firmament DECLARES. He is writing in Romans x. of the evidence there was that the Gospel had been preached of old to *the Gentiles* as well as to the Jews. He begins by laying down, as a great fundamental principle, that 'whosoever shall call on the



name of the Lord shall be saved.' And, in reference to the Gentiles, he says, 'How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?' If he had not been able to prove that *they had heard*, his argument would have fallen to the ground, for their condemnation lay *there*. 'BUT, I say, HAVE THEY NOT HEARD? YES, VERILY!' And where lay his proof that the Gentiles *had* heard the Gospel? In this, that THE FIRMAMENT, which declared the glory of God, spoke distinctly and intelligibly to every nation under heaven. 'Yes, verily,' he says, they *have* heard, for 'THEIR SOUND' (or report of the firmament) 'WENT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS TO THE END OF THE WORLD!'

Can human ingenuity pervert these plain words? Is it possible for us to deal as plainly and honestly with the words of inspiration as we would do with human writings, and yet resist the inevitable conclusion to which this leads us — that the glory of God, which the Firmament declared to the nations, was THE GOSPEL; and, that when the report of the heavens went out through all the earth, it '*preached the Gospel to EVERY creature which is UNDER HEAVEN?*'

So singularly striking and remarkable is this passage in the Psalm, and the apostolic commentary, that every commentator has been arrested by it. As there are not a few of our readers who may think us inclined to find more of the work of redemption in the works of creation than was intended, it may be

useful to insert here some of the remarks which the psalm has elicited from pens of great authority in such matters.

Dr. Waterland, in quoting the words, 'their line is gone out, &c.,' on the authority of an old translation of the Bible, reads, 'their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their report to the end of the world;' and the commentator adds, 'the meaning is, they proclaim the Divine glory, in plain and intelligible characters, to the remotest parts of the earth, as the Gospel shall be proclaimed hereafter by the preaching of the apostles.—Rom. x. 18.'

Bishop Horne says, 'From a citation which St. Paul hath made of the fourth verse, it appears, that, in the exposition of this psalm, we are to raise our thoughts from things natural to things spiritual: we are to contemplate the publication of the Gospel, the manifestation of the Light of life, the Sun of righteousness, and the efficacy of evangelical doctrine. *In this view the ancients have considered the psalm,* and the church therefore hath appointed it to be read on Christmas-day.' The same writer adds, 'the heavens are not endowed like man with the faculty of speech, but they address themselves to the mind of the intelligent beholder in another, and that, when understood, a no less forcible way; the way of *picture or representation.*'

It is almost to be wondered at, that such an admission should have been made, by so acute and sound a writer as Bishop Horne, without his mind being more impressed with the grand conclusion to which it led, regarding one of the ways in which

God never left himself without witness respecting his purposes of mercy ! The heavens are declared **TO SPEAK**. Paul explicitly declares, and it is admitted by his commentators to be declared by him, that the subject of which the heavens speak is the work of Redemption, or the Gospel. Surely, then, if the language they spoke was so universal, as that there was no speech or language where it was not heard, we may safely say, there never was *a time*, either before the fall or after it, when the work of Redemption was not declared ; when ‘ his faithfulness ’ did not appear ‘ established in the very heavens ? ’ But how was the glory of God, as manifested in the work of redemption, declared or spoken of by the celestial bodies ? In answering this question, we shall find the assertion of Bishop Horne, that it was by ‘ picture or representation,’ confirmed, to an extent which that able writer did not probably contemplate when he penned those words.

We have already, more than once, briefly alluded to the beautiful pictures or figures given of ‘ the light of life and the efficacy of evangelical doctrine,’ in the first bursting forth of light out of darkness ; in the collection of light into one focus, the sun, as an emblem of the Sun of Righteousness ; and in the creation of the lesser light, which borrowed all its brilliancy from the sun, as an emblem of the worldly church. Thus the sun is described in many places, not only as being emblematical of Him who is the Fountain of Spiritual light, but the effect of its rays on the visible creation is brought into close comparison with the power of the Law of the Lord on

the conscience. 'There is nothing hid from the heat thereof: the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' This is not an unmeaning *transition*, as is generally thought, from one subject to another, but a beautiful substitution of the antetype for the type. Hence we read in Moses' prophetic language, not only of 'the precious fruits of the sun,' but also of 'the precious things put forth by the moon.'

But there is an expression used in the psalm we have been referring to, in regard to 'the tabernacle for the sun,' which is 'set' in heaven, that opens up a very curious and interesting part of the subject. It is said in the 19th psalm, from which these quotations are made, that '*in them* he hath set a tabernacle for the sun.' Any one who can consult the original here, will at once perceive that the word '*them*,' is in construction with the word '*their*' in the preceding sentences. The expression with which it stands most immediately in construction, is that frequently quoted above, viz. '*their words*;' and it is in *them*, that is, in the words of the firmament, a tabernacle is said to be set for the sun. The compound noun translated 'their words,' means literally 'their distinct, separate sentences or sayings.'

Now, it is a fact, the truth of which will be admitted by every one who has at all looked into ancient mythology, that, from the very earliest ages, the stars have been divided into separate constellations or hieroglyphical figures; and it is equally undeniable, that, so far back as history or anti-

quarian research has been able to penetrate, the signs, figures, or constellations, forming the path, or tabernacle, of the sun, have *always* been *twelve*; and have very nearly corresponded with those still recognized as forming the signs of the zodiac. This would be a matter of very little importance indeed, if there were not some references to this very division, in the oldest of the sacred books themselves. The reader will remember a very singular allusion to them, in the history of Joseph, when *the eleven constellations* are seen making obeisance to *the twelfth*. The bringing forth of Mazzaroth in their seasons, mentioned in the book of Job (written certainly prior to the call of Abraham), is, by the best translators and commentators, considered as referring to the twelve signs of the zodiac; and ‘the sweet influences of the seven stars,’ or planets, and various other allusions to the heavenly bodies, in that book, bespeak a *very early origin* for much of that classification of the stars, which is yet recognized throughout the world.

It is not our purpose, at this stage of our enquiry, to bring forward many singular circumstances connected with this subject, which would divest it of all appearance of substituting fancy for fact, in an investigation of this nature. The few references we have already made, are sufficient for our present purpose; which is, to ascertain whether there are grounds for believing, that, when God set the ordinances of heaven for SIGNS, these signs were *significant* of the great truths, for the illustration of which the earth was created, and ‘*the stars also*.’

We have ascertained that, by the worshippers under the Old Testament, they were looked to as significant of these, and READ as testifying of them. We have also established that it was by their sentences or sayings, going abroad to all the world, that the Gospel was originally preached to every creature which is under heaven. Had there, therefore, even been no allusion to them in the sacred books, prior to the time of David, there would have been authority, from that allusion, and from Paul's words, to believe, that from the beginning they were *so read*. But we have also found other references to the divisions, or hieroglyphics, or separate sentences of the stars, so early as to remove every doubt of their primeval origin; and such appeals to them by God himself out of the whirlwind, to Job, as demonstrate, that the lessons to be drawn from them were not of man's device, but were some of the divers ways in which God spake of old to the fathers. We shall afterwards show such applications and uses of these signs of heaven, under the direction and approbation of God himself, as are calculated to put to silence the sneers of the most sceptical.

Among the rudiments or elements, then, of early instruction—of the revelations from heaven to man, we have found, at present, strong *presumptive evidence* that 'the speech of the firmament' formed a part. In whatever manner we afterwards ascertain that speech was expressed, in the same manner it must have been expressed from the beginning; for *the Book* from which the lessons were read, remained

unchanged. As we shall afterwards find, that the same hieroglyphical characters were portrayed on *the firmament* which were beheld in *the cherubim*,—the propriety of including the signs of heaven amongst the first principles of early knowledge must be abundantly evident. We can imagine nothing more calculated to confirm the faith and the hope of the early worshippers, than when they found the figures established by God himself on the earth, were in conformity with the characters impressed on the firmament. It said to them, that ‘the purposes of his heart had been through all generations.’

Those who have the Bible in their hands need no other book; they need not now such confirmation of the heavenly origin of their worship as was given by the ‘handiwork’ of God in the firmament; nor can we now fully understand *how* of old they read the wonderful and glorious canopy which was spread out to them. Yet such references as have been already made, and others to be subsequently adduced, plainly indicate, not only that they *did* read that book, under the direction of the Spirit of God itself, but, also, something of *the way* in which they drew the instruction; in the words of Bishop Horne, ‘By way of picture or representation.’

The principal objection which may be started to this, is the immensity and countless number of the orbs employed, while lesser lights, placed nearer the earth, would have answered the same purpose. But this difficulty is more imaginary than real. It arises from estimating God’s works by our own finite

ideas, and making magnitude and space, which are *nothing* in the eye of heaven, the chief, or a constituent part of that in the creation wherein the glory of God consists. It is just as difficult to account for the infinite minuteness of the works of creation as for their infinite magnitude—the one is equally as incomprehensible to us as the other. We can no more understand why there should be, what appears to our finite comprehensions, such a waste of animal and vegetable life daily, over the surface of the globe, than we can comprehend why the celestial orbs should have been of such magnitude and in such number. All the works of God are *infinite*. His mercy is infinite; his union of mercy and justice is infinitely wonderful, infinitely glorious; and the universe,—which was to be the scene of that union of mercy and judgment, when HE, who made the worlds, *humbled himself to death*,—would not have been the fit arena for such an event, if it had not been *unsearchably* magnificent and grand. The depth of the humiliation HE was to suffer, who was to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, was only made more conspicuous, when, out of infinite orbs, the smallest planet was chosen; out of the nations by whom it was inhabited, the least people selected; out of the tribes of that people, the least of the thousands of Judah honoured; and amongst the families of Judah, the humblest and the poorest taken part with.

So far, then, from viewing the magnitude of the celestial bodies, in comparison with the earth, and the space they occupy in creation, as forming any



objections to their being employed by Divine Wisdom, to minister to the earth, and to bear testimony to THAT TRUTH, at which all heaven shall wonder without end,—we only recognise, in that provision, an arrangement which stamps it as proceeding from the same hand which ‘set the bounds of all other nations on the earth,’ with a direct reference to ‘the number of the children of Israel;’ (the smallest of all its tribes—‘the least of all people;’) and which has conducted all the affairs of the mightiest states of the world, in every age, with a constant aspect to the completion, not of *their* schemes, but of the word of his prophecy.

But there is a stronger answer than it would become the pen of man to give, to every objection that may be taken to the firmament being declaratory of the truth and settled purposes of God.—‘Thus saith the Lord: if my covenant be not with day and night: and if I have not APPOINTED THE ORDINANCES OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob and David my servant.’

## CHAPTER VIII.

### RECAPITULATION.

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IN the preceding chapters we have traced a brief outline of the media through which knowledge, concerning the ways and purposes of God, was first communicated to man.

On reviewing what has been written, we are deeply sensible of the inadequate command of language to describe a mode of teaching which had Inspiration for its guide, and the tongue of angels to give it utterance. It would, indeed, be a subject, in every respect too high for us, or for any uninspired pen, were it necessary to demonstrate how the Illustrative Symbols, and the Wondrous Speech which accompanied them, were first interwoven; or to describe or analyse the process of thought or of reasoning, by which the phenomena of nature were rendered so deeply interesting to the patriarchs, and so fertilising to the primitive stock from which all languages have sprung. It is fortunate that we require not to do more than prove that, by some radical connexion between natural signs, and words, and ideas, a rich fund of illustrative and prophetic

metaphor was opened up to the early worshippers. We cannot now understand fully, nor is it requisite for us to do so, why such or such a form or figure conveyed such or such a lesson or doctrine ; but it is a most important step, towards understanding what they did and said of old, that we ascertain the fountain from whence the fathers drew the living waters, which refreshed them in their pilgrimage through life. Our enquiry, too, has this encouragement attending it, that it is not a fanciful question, such as a discussion respecting the situation of paradise, the stature of the antediluvians, or the cause of their longevity, but involves questions of the deepest moment and interest to all the human race ; the answers to which are appeals to the Law, to the Testimony, and to the history of the human race ; as recorded, and as prophesied of, in the Scriptures of Truth. If we speak not according to these Scriptures, there is no truth in what we have written ; but if we have quoted them aright, the truths we contend for will compel attention, and convince the understanding, however weak the language in which they are couched.

Although we have already ascertained circumstances, in the early history of the world, which can only be accounted for on the principles advocated in the preceding chapters, the Great Foundation on which our argument has rested is the Eternal and Unchangeable nature of the Purposes of Grace concerning man ; the CERTAINTY that they were promised in Christ Jesus before the world began ; and that, consequently, every part of creation must have been

framed in reference to the declaration, the illustration, and the fulfilment of these purposes. Feeling that the whole gist of the subject lies *here*, we shall be pardoned for, in this place again, earnestly calling the attention of the reader to it.

If the universe generally, according to one school of modern philosophy, existed before the creation of the world:—if the world, at whatever time created, was a small part of a system; into which part sin unexpectedly entered, so as to threaten the ruin of the inhabitants of that little planet, had a Great Being not interposed, and come into that planet to counteract, either by expiation or moral influence and example, the progress and the effects of this unanticipated interruption of God's purposes:—or, if by any other arrangement of Providence, which can be described or imagined, the bringing of Life out of Death, or Good out of Evil, can be considered a *secondary* or accidental circumstance in the great designs of heaven:—or, if the bringing of Life out of Death is a work which any but God could devise, or any being but God himself, in very deed, execute—*then*, if all or any of these suppositions be true, our premises are unstable and our conclusions worthless! *Our* premises! Alas, what is man, whence came he or whither goes he, if the DIVINITY of the PERSON, and, consequently, the ETERNITY of the PURPOSE, of the Son of God, be yet a matter requiring proof?

But if that Holy Child, Jesus, who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was in very deed GOD, then life and immortality are not only brought to light, on a foundation against which the gates of hell cannot prevail,

but the light from His Sepulchre illuminates all the pathways of Providence. It shows a unity of design, and a consistency of procedure in them, from the first creation of matter, to the hour when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the heavens shall pass away with a great noise. It establishes the name and character of the Saviour as the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Ending; it identifies the Word that said 'Let there be light,' with the voice that cried at the grave of Lazarus, 'Lazarus, come forth!' The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

IMMUTABILITY is the grand characteristic of Truth and of the True God. 'I am the Lord, I change not, *therefore* ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.' The more we learn in the Scriptures of the immutability of the counsels of the Lord, the more firmly will the mind resist the reasonings of unbelief. Whenever we begin to think 'the way of the Lord is hidden from us,' then the anchor of the soul loses its hold. The strength of the anchor consists in the force of the evidence. 'I ever spake openly,' is the language of Jesus in the New Testament; 'I have not spoken in secret; I said not to the house of Israel, Seek ye me in vain,' are the words of the same Divine person in the Old Testament. He ever spake openly, but it was always *in figure* or by *parable*; because figures or parables were not only the best elucidators of heavenly things, but because, 'when the thing came to pass' that had been spoken of by figures, the evidence was more conclusive to the mind, when the event fulfilled *many different figures*,

than it could possibly have been by merely fulfilling one often-repeated saying.

The mind of man is peculiarly fitted for receiving, sifting, and appreciating evidence. The force of philosophy and the strength of science lie in the powerful effect which a chain of evidence, or of inductive reasoning, has on the mind; and the benign providence of the Giver of all good is seen, in filling nature with objects of endless interest and infinite variety, for the exercise of this great faculty of the human understanding. Can it be imagined, that the Creator would provide so abundantly towards the temporal wants, and even amusements, of his creatures, in the construction of the universe, and give him nothing in it for the exercise of his noblest faculty, in reference to a matter of such overwhelming interest as His own intentions regarding man? And if he did fill nature with testimonies concerning himself, in what way could such testimonies operate as counsellors, as strengtheners to the mind of man, but as all bearing witness to some one great purpose, as everlasting in its origin as the God from whom it proceeded?

True it is, the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven are often, or generally, considered, as not possessing the same degree of evidence as is found in mathematical demonstration: or, if they are thought capable of demonstration at all, how often are they only considered so, in consequence of a skilful application of the rules of rhetoric, or of moral philosophy, to the subject. The evidence does not lie in the light of the truth itself, but in

the skill of the orator, in *reconciling* it to certain philosophical principles, which are first set up as the standard of truth. With what avidity a saying of Seneca or of Cicero is seized and fondled, if it make the smallest approach to truth; while the sayings of Him, who was Truth itself, are received nearly in the same spirit as was manifested by Pilate, when he asked, What is truth? and went out without waiting for the reply. Or, if the sayings of this Wonderful Counsellor, this Everlasting Father, or the servants he chose, are esteemed, is it not, too often, only as they are held as corroborating the previously recognized principles of moral philosophy? Thus estimating Revelation by Philosophy, instead of subjecting philosophy to the ordeal of the Prophets and Apostles.

Again, as to the *evidence* regarding Revelation.—Can it be denied that a passage, in any Greek or Roman author, in which our Lord may be incidentally mentioned, is grasped at with an eagerness that implies there is some doubt to be satisfied; and that the testimony of Tacitus is required, to corroborate the witness of him who lay on Jesus' breast at supper?

There must some grievous error lurk somewhere, when the evidence which truth ought always to bring with it, is thus rendered so fitful and unsatisfactory. No doubt, the *saving* evidence of the Scriptures is that which comes to the conscience by the power of the Spirit of God; but surely the medium through which it is conveyed, being of the nature of a historical memorial, cannot *in itself* be

of that unsatisfactory kind. Some mist must have been thrown around it. Agrippa was no believer of the Gospel which Paul preached; yet the Apostle says, 'King Agrippa, this thing was not done in a corner; believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.'

When we reflect on how much the enjoyment is marred, which might be drawn from the Scriptures, even in the way of interest; and as containing, incomparably, the most complete and wonderful *demonstration* ever made to man; it is surely well worth enquiry whence arises this *secondary* place which has been allotted these words of truth, instead of the highest room? We submit that it is, in no small degree, owing to the undue importance given, in early youth, to the writings of those who, professing themselves to be wise, became fools. Strange, that the dogmas of those who erected an altar to the unknown God, should be studied at the threshold of the Apostles; and an estimate of the doctrines of Paul regulated by a previous intercourse with the Areopagites.

If this undue, for we speak of the undue importance, not the legitimate use of the classic authors of Greece and Rome; united to a feebleness and fluctuation in modern language, which is apt to give an uncertain, if not a false, meaning to many words,—if these causes militate against the beauty and harmony of the Scripture testimony, as a matter of evidence to ourselves, much more are they calculated to mislead us, in judging of the aspect which the truth, or the testimony regarding it, bore to the



fathers. We have but escaped out of the mist of the dark ages of Europe; and we have escaped, with a Book in our hands, which she, whose name is MYSTERY, taught our predecessors, and teaches her children still, to look at with caution, suspicion, and fear. As the mist has been clearing away, instead of finding, there, the characters of mysticism and terror, we have seen 'FEAR NOT!' emblazoned on every page. Yet we cannot quite forget the rod under which we once smarted. We know the impotence of her threats, yet we tremble as she shakes her crutch. We found the book in the *dead* languages; and a kind of superstitious feeling still leads 'the living *to the dead*; and to spirits that *peep* and mutter,' for an exposition of it. We go peering with the lantern of Diogenes, to the pages of light and life, and joy and peace.

Among the consequences which this mode of consulting the Bible is apt to produce, and that which has raised most of the obstacles in the way of our present enquiry, is the perverted and ridiculous opinions regarding early times and ancient men, which we form, *before* going to the only book which tells us a word of truth on the subject.

It is notorious, that the prevailing foible, both of the Greeks and the Romans, was an exaltation of themselves at the expense of all others; while it is as well known, that the only scintillations of knowledge, in ethics or morals, they possessed, were stolen from the Egyptians, or from a higher unacknowledged source. Yet, we form our ideas of what a *philosopher* should be from such men; and there is

no denying, that we are almost ashamed not to find David or Moses quite filling up the space occupied by Marcus Aurelius in our imagination; and that some writers have taken a good deal of pains to stretch Solomon and Socrates on the same Procrustian bed.

Owing to the prepossessions imbibed at the same source, we take a most contemptible view of the knowledge and acquirements of all who preceded the Greeks. Not content with ascribing, to that ingenious race, a degree of elegance and refinement in some studies and in some arts, to which, it may be fairly owned, none of their contemporaries at least had attained, we too readily think of that refinement, as the result of their own unaided genius; while they were, in fact, the most expert literary and scientific *thieves* of any age in the world; to which honourable calling their situation, between the East and Europe, gave them no ordinary facilities. With a full knowledge of this, we allow ourselves daily to be deceived, in the arts as well as in literature. If a pillar of more than ordinary beauty be found in Palestine or in the Desert, it is immediately noted down that the Greeks must have been there; forgetful that, ere they had begun to *steal* their architecture from other nations, a temple had been reared at Jerusalem, the pattern of which had been given from heaven! We are charmed to find Plato acknowledging a future state; and we are delighted to meet with such a confirmation of Christianity on *so high and respectable authority!* while his laboured reasoning is merely a

proof that the ancient *universal* belief in a future state was, in his day, not quite extinct! That the cogitations of Plato might be supposed to nerve the arm of Cato to self-destruction, is a very reasonable poetical use of them: but it is lamentable to see them appealed to, to strengthen the doctrine of a future state, by any who have in their hands a lesson, on the doctrine of the resurrection, from a man in the land of Uz, ages before Plato was born, which would have made the ears of that philosopher tingle.

We must, again, protest against it being supposed that we are at all disposed to undervalue classical learning. Without it, what could we know of the original languages in which the words of Eternal Life were written? What we deprecate is the distorted and childish ideas concerning ancient things, which an overweening importance given to the writings and opinions of Greece and Rome is apt to generate—ideas which made us think of the early inhabitants of the world as of children and savages, and, which so connect perfection with the higher branches of the Greek philosophy, as to make us forget that philosophy must stand at the bar of Scripture. The words that shall never fall to the ground, or pass away, can never be subjected, without profanation, to the ordeal of schools, which borrowed their best thoughts from corrupted reports and traditions of *that very revelation* which we dare scarcely own to be true without first receiving **THEIR** sanction!!

Forcing our way through the crowd of heathen

writers, who would fain persuade us that, until they began to *philosophize*—in other words, to *doubt*—there were neither wisdom nor common sense in the world; and taking the pieces of the ancient language, which their prattle has not broken to atoms, or Jewish superstition perverted, what have we found awaiting us at the fountain of knowledge and instruction first opened up to man?

Creation itself coming into existence by progressive stages; indicating a settled purpose in its birth, and a fixed period for its continuance: each step illustrating the ways of Him, who is wonderful in counsel—even those ways of heaven which never can be comprehended by mortals, save when they are clothed in figurative images and language.

We have beheld it finished, a temple, every whit of which utters forth the glory of God;—even that glory which consists in doing what no *created* intelligence or power could do—bringing light out of darkness, and making evil productive of good.

A creature is placed in that temple, fitted to appreciate the glory of God, so wonderfully displayed in his works—who, though abundantly warned against yielding to temptation, fell; and so brought in the first practical knowledge of evil into the visible creation. While he is trembling under a fear of the righteous judgment of God, and the old enemy is exulting, in having marred the merciful purposes of God towards man; behold the first practical moral illustration of God's ultimate and great purpose—that of mercy rejoicing over judgment!—the introduction of the promise manifesting, how,

though sin appeared reigning unto death, grace would ultimately reign, through the righteousness of the seed of the woman, unto eternal life.

In the situation Adam then stood, we were led to contemplate the amazing power that would be given to the promise, as a comforter, by the evidence afforded, at the creation, that the promise and the fulfilment of it had been God's ETERNAL purpose. Adam was thus assured, that mercy was built in the very heavens, and that 'God was not a man that he should lie, or the son of man that he should repent.' For the still more efficient strengthening of the faith of Adam's family and descendants, we have seen also a remarkable course of instruction provided. God had not yet done any of those marvellous works among the children of men, which now fill the pages of his book, and are recorded there, that 'we, through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.' But, in lieu of this, He furnished the elements of 'instruction in righteousness,' of a nature which, while it was, to them, the evidence of things not seen, laid the foundation of all knowledge and all prophecy, in such a connexion between language and the visible emblems stamped upon and around the creation, as enriched most marvellously the medium of communication between God and man, proved its Divine origin and authority, and incontestibly demonstrated that THE God who keepeth covenant and mercy for ever, is THE God who made the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is.

It remains for us, in the following chapters, to

trace the influence of this mode of instruction on the families and tribes of the earth—on the seed of the serpent, as well as on those with whom they have always made war; even on those who kept the commandments of God, and held by the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE PERFECT IN THEIR GENERATIONS.

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THE branch of the posterity of Adam which naturally first claims our attention, is the line of the antediluvian patriarchs, extending from Adam to Noah. As Paul, in writing to the Hebrews, has given a very interesting commentary on the most remarkable passages in their history, we propose taking that commentary in connexion with the brief record left by Moses. But, ere doing so, there are some considerations which it is necessary to keep in mind, in consulting that commentary. We shall therefore offer a few preliminary remarks on

1st. The nature of all the New Testament commentaries on the Old Testament.

2d. The nature of Faith. And,

3d. The example given, by the Apostle, of Faith in the abstract, ere he proceeds to show how it influenced the Old Testament worshippers.

In regard to the New Testament commentaries on the Old Testament, we observe, in them all, a close adherence to *the record*. The Spirit of God, which was bestowed on the Apostles, does not appear to

have revealed to them any circumstances in the lives or characters of the elders, with which they were not previously acquainted, or which were not matters of historical record; but it explained to them, as they explain to their readers, the causes which influenced them to act as they did—the reasons for the course of conduct they pursued. But, even in explaining these causes and reasons, they always prove their assertions *by what is recorded*; and not by something in the characters or conduct of those of whom they write, previously unknown to those to whom they addressed themselves. A forcible illustration of this is afforded by our Lord himself, when he proves that Moses was instructed in the doctrine of the resurrection. Our Lord, who knew all things from the beginning, could, if he had seen meet, have set the question at rest, as to whether the hope of the resurrection had been revealed to Moses, by saying, ‘Before Moses was, I am; and I, who know the nature of the faith and hope of Moses, can assure you, that he did possess that hope.’ This is, however, never the way in which he, or his servants the Apostles, referred to the Old Testament. It was always with them, ‘What is written? How readest thou?’ Accordingly, he proves that Moses was not ignorant of the doctrine of the resurrection, *by what is recorded to have taken place at the bush*. In the same manner, when Paul wishes to prove that the elders lived by faith, he demonstrates *that their recorded acts* bore testimony to this.

But, in consulting him concerning these men of



old, it is necessary for us to attend to the second proposition before us,—the nature of the Faith by which he says they were actuated.

He begins, by defining Faith, or Belief, to be ‘the ground or confidence of things hoped for, *the evidence* of things not seen.’ He does not puzzle and perplex his readers, by attempting to describe that which is indescribable, the operations of the mind; but he asserts, that the assent of the mind or understanding, to any thing hoped for, must rest on, and arises from, EVIDENCE. The corollary to be drawn from this is, plainly, that whenever we hear or read of any being actuated by the hope of something not seen, there must have been *evidence* laid before them of a very convincing nature, concerning the unseen things, when it made them prefer future blessings to present enjoyments.

To place his meaning beyond any doubt, he prefaces his historical references with an illustration, which any one may understand, of what it is to believe a matter *upon evidence*. He says, ‘By faith we *understand* that the worlds were created by the Word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.’

What are the *unseen things* here? The creation of the worlds. Where is *the evidence*? The things that *are seen*.

We are aware that this passage is generally quoted, as an exemplification of what it is to believe a thing simply on *assertion*, without any proof. But this would be a strange way to illustrate the Faith which rests on evidence—a singular mode of

enforcing his argument,—by bringing forward an instance to the contrary.

But how do the visible things bring *evidence* that they were created by the Word of God? Just by their appearance corroborating the testimony of the Scriptures regarding their creation. Suppose that the earth and heavens did *not* present the aspect they do to us; that there was no sun to rule the day, no moon to rule the night; and that, under such circumstances, we were called upon to believe the Mosaic account. This would be a good instance of believing without evidence. But would we believe it without evidence? The thing is impossible. There may be hope against any present appearance of its fulfilment; but *belief* AGAINST *evidence*, is as opposed to the Scripture account of it, as to common sense.

We are the more anxious to direct attention to this, because the simple Faith of the Scriptures is not only sadly darkened, by making it to consist in a blind admission of something inexplicable, but because scepticism draws many into her net, by persuading them, that they may safely doubt the correctness of many things stated in the Scriptures, and yet maintain reliance on their *general* veracity. The assertion is as false in ethics as it is in theology. Entertain doubts of the correctness of a messenger in trifling matters, and reliance on his testimony respecting greater will soon give way. Take the instance before us, of credence in the Scripture account of the creation of the worlds. Can we daily listen to grave assertions respecting the im-

possibility of reconciling the phenomena of nature with the Mosaic account, and yet maintain that veneration for the words of Moses which is due to the writings of the prophet who spake face to face with God? Nay, our next step will be, to listen, as patiently, to lucubrations respecting the learning he gained in Egypt; until we end in doubting his inspiration, and see nothing in the tabernacle but imitations of Egyptian splendour, and copies of the services in the temples of On.

On the other hand, if we are accustomed to compare the works of nature with the Scripture account of their formation, and see, at every view, new circumstances coinciding with that account, is not our faith in, our credence of, that account strengthened? We received the account from a quarter in which we had perfect reliance; and we find in this, as in every thing else, that God is true. The mind is thereby strengthened; not merely in respect to the matter immediately under consideration, but in every other testimony proceeding from the same quarter; and we acknowledge, with thankfulness, that in this, as in every other article of faith, it is not 'a thing *incredible*' we are called upon to believe. Observe, too, even in *this* instance of faith, in the creation of the worlds by the Word of God, how closely linked faith and hope are together. The truth of the Word of God respecting the present heavens and earth, confirms to our minds the truth of its testimony respecting the new heavens and the new earth. It thus becomes to us 'the ground or confidence of things hoped for.' We are

on an earth that has been cursed; we are hoping for a heaven and an earth 'wherein dwelleth righteousness;' and every confirmation to our minds that it was Jesus, the Word of God, who said, 'Let light be,' and 'Light was,' in the manner described by his servant Moses, is a confirmation to our expectation, that the time is approaching, when all who are in their graves shall hear the same powerful word.

Having premised these few remarks on the nature of the faith, which the Apostle proposes to illustrate by examples from the Old Testament, let us attend to such instances as he adduces, as are connected with this branch of our enquiry. The first is, that 'by faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.'

As has been already noticed, he is not here telling us, by inspiration, something which the record is silent about; he is, by inspiration, drawing an inference from the recorded account; ascribing a motive for Abel's conduct which the record corroborates; referring us to WORKS done by Abel, which can be accounted for on no principle, but that he was actuated by a faith and hope in something not seen—faith which could not have existed without evidence. In accordance with this, another apostle says, that 'Abel's works were righteous, and Cain's works evil.' What works? They are thus recorded:—

'And it came to pass, that on the appointed days Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

‘And Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his sheep and goats, and of the fat thereof.’

These are the only recorded works of Abel. There was *one work* of Cain afterwards, the murder of his brother; but that is not included in the works to which the apostle John alludes, when he contrasts their acts; for he says, ‘*wherefore* slew he him? *because* his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.’ The evil works of Cain, which contrasted with the good works of Abel, preceded the murder, and were the cause of it.

We must not indulge the fancy, that the apostles, in referring to this matter, are telling us something unheard of before, about the general character or dispositions of the two young men. These inspired writers were not so ill-instructed scribes, as to undertake to prove any thing from the Scriptures, and make out their argument by supplying facts. They referred to a Book, read in the synagogues every sabbath, and in the churches every first day of the week; and the whole force of their argument lay in there being sufficient, in the record, to sustain and verify what they said.

The evil works of Cain and the good works of Abel lay entirely then in the nature of their offerings. It will not do to indulge in speculations about *the dispositions* with which they were brought; *that* the Bible says nothing of—or rather, what it does say, militates against the idea, that Cain came with his offering either grudgingly or of necessity, or under any kind of bad disposition. It was not until his offering was rejected, that ‘his countenance

*fell.* This expression seems rather to intimate that he had come with cheerfulness and alacrity.

We shall, in vain, attempt to find a satisfactory explanation of this remarkable transaction, without availing ourselves of the information we have obtained, regarding the place of worship to which these offerings were brought.

At the east of Eden, the insignia, which afterwards constituted the glory of the tabernacle and temple, had been placed. There God dwelt between the cherubim, and from thence we find Him speaking to the worshippers.

Cain, the first born, approaches with his offering. But what is its nature? Fruits from the ground, which the Lord had cursed; without any propitiation—any thing to intimate his belief in the promise, or in the truth illustrative of that promise, which was ‘to keep the way of the tree of life.’ There could be no *faith* in Cain’s offering—no respect to something not seen; and ‘without faith it is impossible to please God.’ Therefore, to ‘Cain and his offering God had not respect.’

Abel draws near, but with what? WITH THE SAME OFFERINGS WHICH WERE AFTERWARDS OFFERED UNDER THE LAW; not merely with THE FIRSTLINGS of his sheep and his goats, but THE FAT THEREOF, respecting which so many injunctions were afterwards given to the priests under the law.

In the correspondence between the offering which Abel brought, and those which were afterwards the subject of so many admonitions from the top of Sinai, and from between the cherubim—the iden-

tity of the worship of Eden with that of the tabernacle and temple is clearly established. The distinction between clean and unclean animals was observed in both cases—the first-born were alike chosen, and the fat of the offering is noticed in the one case as well as in the other. Why, therefore, should Paul select Abel's sacrifice, as a proof of his faith, while he passes over all the other Old Testament sacrifices; or at least does not allude to the faith in which they were offered? The distinction between them seems to have consisted in this: under the law, sacrifice was rendered *incumbent* on all the seed of Abraham according to the flesh. They were bound by the law, and under the curse of it, to observe them. Under the law, therefore, it became *a form*; ordained to keep alive a public attestation to the faith which was afterwards to be revealed, whatever might be the faith of the individual worshippers. 'The law was not of faith; for, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.' The law said nothing about the faith of the worshippers; it commanded them a form of worship to be observed, whatever their faith might be. It pointed to something to be believed in; but the faith of the individual worshippers was a matter between themselves and God.

In the case of Cain and Abel, on the other hand, the bringing of the offering seems to have been *a voluntary* act. In this case, the nature of their faith would be plainly indicated by the nature of their respective offerings. Cain's offering, as we have

seen, had nothing of *the* faith in it which is the ground or confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The offering of Abel had these characteristics; for he brought *an innocent substitute*, on which the fire from the cherubim fell; *that* being *always* the way in which *respect* was shewn to an offering, by 'the God who answereth by fire.' And, as the promise had explicitly said, that it was the seed of the woman that was to take away sin, or bruise it, and not a lamb—so Abel's faith *must* have respected something future and unseen, of which the lamb was a type. Well, then, might the Apostle say, 'by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, (justified?) *God testifying of his gifts*, and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh.' And if we ask what taught Abel to do this? the answer will be found in that figurative preaching of the truth at Eden, to which Abel's offering figuratively responded, but which Cain disregarded.

The rest of the scene in the Edenic temple is remarkable. When Cain saw that his offering was not 'looked upon, he was very wroth and his countenance fell.' 'Why art thou wroth,' the Lord says to him, 'and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well—if thou bringest my approved offering—'shalt thou not have the excellency?'—is not the birthright, is not the priesthood thine? 'But if thou doest not well'—if thou bringest not the offering in which I smell a savour of rest—'shall the sin offering lie at the door?'—shall I want a man



to stand before me in my house to offer it? Nay, in that case the elder shall serve the younger. But Abel covets not this birthright; 'his desire is *towards thee*,' and thou shalt yet have the supremacy 'if thou obeyest my voice indeed—but my offering, in its appointed time, shall not be wanting.'

The sequel gives a just but melancholy picture, of the consequences of listening to the suggestions of 'that wicked one,' instead of taking heed to the counsels of Him who teacheth to profit. 'Cain talked to Abel, his brother,' and we may suppose what the subject of their conversation would be. Maddened at the thought of the preference shown to Abel's vicarious sacrifice, over his own more *rational* mode of worship, and blindly imagining that the death of his brother would remove every difficulty regarding the priesthood, 'he rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.'

But the purposes of God are never to be frustrated by the opposition of man;—nay, 'he makes the very wrath of man to praise him.' The apostasy of Cain, the murder and its punishment, only served to point out, more distinctly, the line of demarcation between the truth and the lie, and the spirit which animates the latter; while it confirmed the word of God, that he would put enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, in a spiritual as well as in a literal sense. It also gave room for a new illustration of God's sovereign way of dealing, in providing a *Substitute* (Seth)—a way which was often afterwards exemplified; as in the case of Jacob and Esau; Ephraim and Manasseh; the tribe

of Levi, as substitutes for the first-born; Samuel in place of the family of Eli; David in place of Saul, and many others. It is very remarkable, also, that the punishment of Cain was the same as the punishment of the first-born church of the Jews, which imbrued its hand in the blood of the Great Martyr to the truth. To them pertained the birthright and the priesthood; but ever since the righteous blood of their own brother was shed, they have been wanderers and vagabonds in the earth; and, like Cain, *a mark* has been set on them, and their preservation, as a separate people, while driven out from the presence of God, is, unto this day, a miraculous witness to the truth of revelation.

Although Adam had many sons, one is chosen *in place of Abel*, whom Cain slew. This plainly intimates, not only that a line of descendants was to be kept separate, in which the true worship was to be maintained, and in which, in the fulness of time, the promised seed of the woman was to appear,—but that a choice was, in every case, made of a son, to whom pertained the excellency or priesthood which Cain and his descendants forfeited. This is the line of the recorded Patriarchs; the sons of God; the generation to the Lord who sought the face or presence of the God of Jacob; exclusion from which *presence* (the cherubim at Eden) even Cain considered a punishment greater than he could bear. In the days of Enos, the son of Seth, public preaching was added to the other institutions by which the name of the Lord was declared.

‘The generation of the upright’ was kept ‘perfect’

until the deluge; for a very important purpose, as we shall afterwards see. In the meantime, some remarkable lessons in *the faith* were given.

Nine hundred years after the creation, and about the same period from the deluge, seven of these patriarchs were alive, in the enjoyment of each other's society at the east of Eden. Death had not yet overtaken Adam, nor have we any intimation, nor any reason to suppose, that it had yet happened, from natural causes, amongst any of his posterity. Yet, even then, when death had not reached him on whom it was pronounced, and he was now nearly a thousand years old, Enoch calls his son Methuselah—(he *dies*, and the Lord cometh): certainly an extraordinary instance of the faith which is the evidence of things not seen, as well as the most exact prophecy in respect to time of any recorded in the scriptures.

The situation of the Church at Eden was at this period very interesting; with her seven Elders or Patriarchs, alive and ministering at her altar. *Adam dies*, and a few years afterwards Enoch is translated that he should not see death; two most wonderful and instructive lessons within so short a period.

But the instruction which the translation of Enoch was calculated to convey, would have been greatly lost, if there had not appeared something *before his translation*, which would account to the Patriarchs for such a demonstration of the Divine favour in his case. That instructive something was his faith—a faith in Him who is invisible. That

faith was evidenced in the name he gave his son; and, we are warranted to say, it was a faith that respected not only *death*, but the resurrection and change of the body—for the reward of it was *translation*—and the reward of faith has always been of the nature of the thing hoped for. Thus did the Patriarchs, within a few short years, witness the execution, literally, of the threatened curse on Adam, and obtain a confirmation of their hope of redemption from it, as explicit in the person of Enoch, as the judgment had been in the person of Adam.

We have not ceased to admire the prophetic faith of Enoch, when we are called to consider an equally wonderful instance of it, in the case of Lamech; who names his son (Noah), and expresses his hope regarding him, with a direct reference to the station he was to occupy, and the work he was to be engaged in six hundred years afterwards.

The station Noah held was so eminent, as a preacher of righteousness or justification, and the work he was to be employed in so great, that his character and fitness for them required to be borne testimony to. As he preached justification, so, to give his preaching weight, he appeared influenced himself by that which he declared—testimony was therefore borne to him as a *just* man. And as he was to be the first priest in the new world, so he behoved to be ‘perfect in his generations’—of the right line from Seth—of the untainted order of the patriarchal priesthood, unmixed and uncontaminated by connexion with the daughters of men.

With Noah the line of the antediluvian elders closes ; and although the notices of their history are neither numerous nor lengthy, they are very conclusive regarding the nature of their religious knowledge and belief. We behold them, not only instructed as to the ground of justification before God, and giving lessons in the faith by which, even to this day, they, though dead, yet speak ;— but we see the hope of the resurrection and the hope of a change on the human body, so as to fit it to walk with God, so strong, that one of them is rewarded for his faith in this respect, by being taken in the body into those mansions whither Elijah was afterwards in like manner translated.

But, above all, we behold in their history the commencement of that separation between light and darkness—between truth and falsehood—between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, which was to be carefully maintained, openly in the world, until the Great Priest and Prophet arose, perfect in his generations, by whom all righteousness was to be fulfilled. When the time arrived that the book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham, had to be made up, it then appeared that God had, from the very first, been preserving that genealogy pure and incontrovertible ; so that even at his birth it should appear that He was, indeed, the son promised to Eve, who was to bruise the head of the serpent.

While this was, evidently, one of the grand objects which Divine Providence had in view in the

record which was kept from the beginning; it was no less apparent that, if possible, a still more important purpose was subserved by it.

Sacrifices had, from the first, been offered up by priests, in a line chosen by God; and they were continued in that line till He came who suffered without the gate. In whatever faith, with whatever view, sacrifices might have been brought to the altar, amongst other courses of priests in other nations, the elders first, and 'the twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night,' offered sacrifices plainly of a typical and prospective nature; sacrifices which, when attended to according to the Divine commandment, clearly indicated that all the efficacy they had, was derived from that which was prefigured, and not from any merit of their own.

Nothing could, therefore, more clearly show, that the Lord Jesus was the true victim—that his sacrifice was for *the redemption of sins that were past*, as well as future; nor any thing more strikingly justify the faith of the elders, than that the Lord, when he was offered, was led to the altar by the hands of priests, descended of, and in the right line of the patriarchs and elders. It most distinctly pointed him out as the antetype of all those atoning sacrifices, by which the sins of the world were typically purged, by those whom he chose to minister to him, from the time of righteous Abel, to the time of Zacharias, son of Barachias, who was slain between the temple and the altar.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE FLOOD.

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ALTHOUGH the testimony from heaven regarding man has always been of a very humiliating nature, yet there appears to have been something pre-eminently bad in the policy and public conduct of mankind, for some time previous to the flood. The fertility of the earth had, probably, been much greater than it afterwards was, and the air more salubrious;—as seems to be attested by the extraordinary longevity of the antediluvians. That longevity, and the abundance of all things, would naturally tend to make the bulk of mankind reckless of any thing but present enjoyment, and unmindful of the certainty of death. There seems, also, to have been a great disposition to violence, unruliness, and contempt of government;—arising in part, it may be conjectured, from the want of the authority, afterwards given, to punish murder by the death of the culprit.

While these circumstances appear to have induced a state of corruption and violence, among the

mass of the people, the true worship was losing its followers, by the seductive arts of the daughters of men, and other causes. So awful was this defection, that there seemed to be none 'to stand in the breach;' and God said, 'I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth.'

The wiles of the enemy, which the promise had frustrated in the case of Adam, and which the appointment of Seth had nullified in the instance of Cain, threatened at last to be successful. But God had a plan of escape and of mercy in store,—'Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord;' or, in the words applied to a preacher of righteousness, like himself, long afterwards, 'he obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.' But Noah's 'preaching of righteousness' seemed to the busy world like idle tales.

It would appear from the Lord threatening, when he commanded Noah to make the Ark, that His Spirit 'should not always strive with man, yet, that his days should be one hundred and twenty years,' that the Ark was one hundred and twenty years in building, or, as the Apostle Peter terms it, 'a preparing.' We see good grounds, then, for Paul saying that Noah did so *in faith*, as the danger he apprehended was *not seen*. But how he should be styled a 'preacher of righteousness,' and why it should be said, 'he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith,' when not one word about righteousness is to be found in the record of what he did or said, calls for some enquiry.

God threatened the flood, because 'all flesh had



corrupted HIS *way*.' The way of God was seen where 'the way of the Tree of Life was kept.' This way all flesh had corrupted, and gone aside after their own ways. The way of the Tree of Life was a memorial of the Truth of God,—a public declaration of the Divine Righteousness. Divine Righteousness was written and emblazoned at the east of the Garden of Eden. When a preacher came from thence, to warn a sinful world, he must have studied the doctrine of the Lord, which was held up at Eden, to very little purpose, if he had any thing to testify of, in his preaching, but 'the Righteousness which saveth from death.'

To the preacher of this Righteousness the Lord says, 'thee only have I seen righteous before me in this generation.' We cannot suppose, that on the whole earth, at that time, amongst all the millions, there was not one honest man, nor one respectable character, save Noah. But they all, with the solitary exception of Noah, had forsaken the way of the Lord. He cleaved to the Lord and to *his* Righteousness, with full purpose of heart, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; and, when he came abroad to warn a guilty world, the quarter he came from would be very well known, and the subject of his preaching pretty shrewdly guessed, even by those who might not personally hear him.

But his preaching was not confined to words; he was engaged in an act that would soon be noised abroad, and be heard of in the most remote countries. Noah, in making the Ark, both preached to

the world and condemned the world. He could not, for one hundred and twenty years, have been preparing an Ark, without the world becoming well acquainted with the nature of his fears; and it could not have known this without knowing full well, by the preaching of the Ark, that the destruction, if it came at all, would come because they had forsaken the way to which Noah adhered.

There was another public ground of accusation against them, also, which would give great meaning to the preaching of the Ark. When God made the heavens and the earth in six days, he rested on the seventh day, and hallowed it. The world could not have been in the state of violence described, without these days of the Lord being desecrated and despised. The first step of infidelity, in every age, is to despise the Sabbaths of the Lord. When Israel, in after ages, did so, they were carried away captive, *that the land might enjoy its sabbaths!* Few sabbaths, indeed, could the earth have enjoyed when it was covered with violence; and it is a circumstance which, to look back upon, may make the stoutest heart quail, which despises or disregards the Lord's instituted days of rest for man and for the earth,—that it was ON THE SEVENTH DAY that the flood was brought in upon the world of the ungodly!

Behold, too, the goodness as well as the severity of God! One hundred and twenty years the long-suffering of God *waited* while the Ark was preparing. How remarkably were the faith and hope of Noah tried during this period! All things seemed

to continue as they were from the creation of the world. The Lord appeared, to mankind, to delay his coming; and the wickedness of man seemed increasing rather than diminishing. In vain would Noah remind them, that the same Almighty word which commanded the waters to go into the place appointed for them, had but to speak, and they would again issue forth to devastate the earth; or the expansion cease, at his word, to divide between the waters above and below the firmament. In vain would he instruct them, that the upholding of all things as they were, was as much a daily act of God's power as the framing of them at first; in vain assure them, that the purpose of their being upheld was for vindicating the Truth of God, which man was disregarding; and that a continued disregard of that Truth, and the ordinances in which it was shewn, would as truly bring on the day of retribution, as respect to His ordinances had met the reward of righteousness. The men of renown were too deeply immersed in the pleasures of the world, and in the abuse of God's gifts, to attend to such unwelcome truths; or they were too wise, in their own conceits, to lower their 'gigantic minds' to the obsolete philosophy of the handful of worshippers at Eden.

If admonition was disregarded when Noah first began to preach, how would disregard turn to derision, when they saw the infatuated man—as he would be deemed—actually begin to build a vessel for safety from the prophesied storm; and as year after year rolled on, and the sky continued unclouded,

how would the finger of scorn be raised towards the useless and cumbrous edifice, in which he proposed to seek for shelter! What, but the firmest reliance on the word of Him who cannot lie, could have supported the Prophet amidst the contempt to which he was exposed; what but the faith which was the evidence of things not seen, could have made him enter the Ark, amidst the contumely of the world, while yet there was not a speck in the horizon to indicate the coming ruin!

*It was seven days after Noah entered into the ark ere the flood came.* Whether we think of the anxieties and agitations of those within, (of whom Ham, afterwards the despiser of the promise, was one,) or the shouts of laughter from without, during that week, it is impossible for imagination to conceive any scene in which the powers of description so utterly fail—unless it be the seventh day itself, when all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

Reader, is this a fictitious scene we are bringing to mind; or was it so indeed, as the earth itself bears testimony to this day, that the world that then was, being overwhelmed with water, perished, and that few, that is, eight souls, were saved in the despised ark? Was it so of a truth, and with the assurance of inspiration itself, that this was the same **FIGURE AS BAPTISM**—can we longer shut our eyes to the *figurative* nature of preaching under the Old Testament? Was ever a sermon written in characters so legible, in terms so terrific, as this? Was ever the washing away of iniquity by water

ever so fearfully illustrated? Or was ever **MERCY REJOICING OVER JUDGMENT** so conspicuously displayed in figure, as when **THE ARK** rose upon the waters, and was carried **OVER** the billows? In the midst of this storm, this scene of horror and desolation, from which imagination shrinks, even at this lapse of time,—a despised '**VESSEL OF MERCY**' is seen riding aloft in safety; guided, miraculously guided, by that glorious arm of might, which will continue to preserve the truth and those who cling to it, through every tempest and amidst every danger, until they reach in safety the desired haven. The thief on the cross found mercy at the eleventh hour; and one of our own poets has written of 'Mercy sought and mercy found between the stirrup and the ground.' We know not what eye observed the ark—what prayer for mercy may have been put up, and heard, from among the surrounding billows, when it was seen: but of this we may be assured, that many amongst the sufferers, who had thought with indifference or contempt of the gleam of mercy which the promise beamed upon Adam, when *he* was in distress, would now gladly grasp at every figure, in which help to the helpless had been preached, and hope to the hopeless had been displayed.

The faith which sustained Noah, through the one hundred and twenty years' probation and the horrors of the flood, continued to animate him in the new world. Limited as the number of animals in the ark was, from which all the earth had now to be supplied, Noah scrupled not to offer a sacrifice

to the Lord, of every clean kind, out of the small number preserved. 'And the Lord smelled a sweet savour.' If the Lord ever could have been pleased with the death of thousands of rams; or if Noah (in that infant state of an *ignorant* world) could have imagined so, surely there had been holocausts sufficient, when every thing that had life on the earth died. But Noah seems to have had a higher idea of the meaning of sacrifice; and by making *it* the first act which the new world witnessed, he plainly taught, that it was by the altar, and the propitiation of the altar, which the old world despised, that the new creation was to be preserved and saved.

We see, then, in all the events attending the history of the flood; in the previous preaching of Noah; in the mode of escape; in the nature of the punishment; and in the establishment of the purified worship of God, in the renewed and cleansed world, that the truth of God, which the early race of mankind despised, is that which the author of it ever guards with a watchful and a jealous eye. That truth which he protects, is that to which all creation is made subservient. Creation stands firm only while that truth is maintained; and the elements, at the command of their Creator, either bear witness to the blessings, which the acknowledgement of it brings, or become his ministers to execute the judgment written against its perversion.

A new morning dawns upon the earth—a morning ushered in by sacrifice. An altar is built, and a tabernacle (called in our translation, a tent) is

reared, in which the chosen priest and prophet of God officiates. Thus, the perpetuation of that chain of evidence is provided for, which was to be perfected when Shiloh came; and the flood, which swept away mankind and all their works, leaves the hope of the promise uninjured, or rather strengthened. To assure man of the preservation of the world until the promise was fulfilled, the bow is placed in the heavens, accompanied by the covenant of God, that while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, summer and winter, shall not cease.

By that covenant the world stood, until it witnessed the coming of Him, who took away the sin offering by the sacrifice of himself; and, by it, continues to be preserved, 'until the Gospel be preached to all nations, for a witness; and then shall the end be.'

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE ONE LIP AND THE HEAVENLY TOWER.

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It is recorded, that, for some time after the deluge, all the earth was 'of one language *and* of one speech.' Language and speech being the same thing, it must be evident, to every one, that this translation does not convey the meaning of the passage, there being no such thing as unnecessary repetition in the words of Scripture. The literal rendering is, 'of one lip and of one words.'

The researches we have already been engaged in, and the use made of the word 'lip,' to signify worship, in other passages of Scripture, make it unnecessary to enter into any lengthened discussion, to prove that the information given in this passage is, that, for a century or more after the flood, all the descendants of Noah continued to maintain the same form of worship, the same form of words in religious matters. We have merely to remind the reader of the proof, formerly given, of the necessity of a change, or novelty, in *words*, when there was any change in *opinions*.



That this 'form of words,' was 'SOUND,' will appear evident from the following considerations. Being universal, it must have included the children of Shem, as well as the families of Ham and Japheth. Now, the Lord God, was to dwell in the tents of Shem; not only in His incarnation, but because in them there was, at all times, to be a seed serving the Lord. Besides, the deluge, which bore testimony to the pure faith, was too recent an event to permit any open profession of departure from it;—any 'lip,' or 'words,' in opposition to it. A priest had been preserved to the new world, who took not that honour to himself, but was called of God as Aaron was; and the wrath of God had, too recently, been revealed from heaven, against all departures from Noah's faith, to permit any renunciation of it to be openly expressed or favorably received.

In such a state of the religious world, how could such a scheme, as that of the building of the Tower of Babel, have originated?

It seems almost unnecessary, before answering this question, to refute the childish idea, that mankind combined together to build a tower, the top of which would touch the blue sky;—or the scarcely less absurd suppositions, that it was meant as a place of refuge in case of another deluge, or intended for an astronomical observatory. Had mankind been as silly as the two first conjectures imply, or as much addicted to one branch of natural philosophy as the other notion suggests,—the top of Mount Ararat would have better suited their purpose.

These *guesses* respecting it are noticed, not as containing any thing worthy of refutation, but to call attention to the gross absurdity of many of the ideas entertained in youth, respecting events recorded in the Scriptures;—ideas fostered, in no small degree, by the prints, miscalled *illustrations*, which are often put into the Bible, to render it *attractive* to children; and which, even in riper years, maintain a hold of the imagination, most destructive of any thing approaching common sense, in judging of the employments and understanding of the ancients.

Perhaps the ridiculous ideas regarding, and equally absurd attempts to delineate, the *Tower* of Babel, cannot meet with a better check, than by adverting to the simple fact, that the word translated ‘tower,’ means a large or magnificent building of *any kind*. The next step, in getting rid of idle fancies regarding it, is to observe, that the word translated ‘*top*,’ means Origin, Beginning, Design, or Authority. Applied to the body, the word means *head*; applied to a design, it means the origin or intention of it. What was there, then, in the situation of Noah’s posterity, during the first and second centuries after the deluge, which could have led them to think of founding ‘a city and a magnificent building, the head of which was to be IN the heavens;’—in other words, a Temple, with a city for the worshippers, claiming heavenly origin and design?

They were then, as we are told, and have been considering, all of one language. The ideas conveyed by language, being intimately interwoven with heavenly or spiritual matters, and the roots

being immutable from which the words and ideas sprung, mankind would all, consequently, be of one way of speaking regarding heavenly things, while they continued that one language, in its purity, as they had received it from Noah. No schism had as yet overtly taken place amongst them. But they were now beginning, rapidly, to branch, or spread out, '*from* the east,' or place of God's worship (Noah's altar). There was great danger that this emigration would lead to alterations and corruptions of the one lip, and consequently mar the unanimity which now prevailed. It seems, therefore, to have occurred to them, that a magnificent building, or temple, elucidating heavenly things, and professing to derive its authority, in such matters, from heaven itself, would form a centre to which the worship of the world might be directed; so that it would preserve them from '*breakings*,' divisions, heresies or schisms, in religious matters, over all the world.

There was one consideration, in particular, which would enforce their arguments in favour of such a design. The Edenic temple and its cherubim had been swept away. The figures which Noah had seen there, and of which he must have told them, were the great standard to which the opinions of men *ought* to have been brought, however much they were neglected, before the flood. It would, very probably, be said on the plain of Shinar, as men have ever been ready to say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in their deeds.' If *we* had such wonderful figures remaining to us, there would

be no fear of our departing from the the truth as the old world did.

Historical tradition, though in itself a very erring guide, generally contains some *glimpse* of the truth: and its apparently absurd assertions do not infrequently carry in them so much of the original facts, as to prove, from the very corruption of them, the nature of the things which have been perverted. All history and tradition agree in asserting that *the top* of the tower of Babel was dedicated either to the observation or the worship of the heavenly bodies. This prevailing, this unanimous attestation of the ancients, to a connection between *the top* of Babel and the hosts of heaven, is, to say the least of it, curious; ascertaining, as we have done, that the illustration of heavenly things was the design of Babel. To suppose that mankind would *all* agree to worship the hosts of heaven, so soon after the deluge, is improbable in the highest degree; as much so as to imagine, that they would all combine in the cultivation of astronomy. But it certainly is remarkable, that the tradition should be so universal, and that it should be accompanied by a report, that the antediluvian elders were themselves greatly addicted to the same study.

The concurrent testimony of all antiquity and history on this matter, cannot in any way be accounted for so satisfactorily, as by the suggestions thrown out, in a former chapter, respecting the important nature of the truths preached by the heavenly luminaries. We shall, afterwards, more clearly ascertain, than could be done in the previous stage

of our enquiry, that this ancient mode of reading the glory of God in the firmament, was not an invention of man. It was countenanced and referred to by the Spirit of God itself. Man corrupted it, as he has corrupted every mode of divine teaching. We shall not, here, advert to the astrological or astronomical traditions of Babel, further than to remind the reader, that, if the illustration and perpetuation of heavenly truth was the design of that building—which could only then have been done by means of figurative representation—and if the restoration of those signs, which had been given by God himself, formed any part of the design,—then the temple of Babel *must* have contained signs and figures corresponding, in many respects, with those which appeared in the visible heavens.

We trace, then, in corrupted traditions, a corroboration of the Scripture account; that, while mankind all spoke the same thing, were perfectly of one mind, or in one profession of the truth, they formed the design of constructing a building, where the insignia which illustrated these truths should be portrayed, and a standard erected, that non-conformity might be prevented, schisms avoided, and divisions of sentiment, in heavenly things, averted from the world. The scheme was an ingenious one; it would, but for the interposition of heaven, have been a successful one; for God himself says, ‘Nothing would be restrained from them which they purposed to do,’ unless the hand of Heaven interposed. Why, then, should so feasible an undertaking have been defeated?

It would be a sufficient answer to this question to say, because they had no authority from Heaven for any such scheme ; and Heaven never allows man to legislate *for it*. But the propriety, humanly speaking, of the interference, will be apparent, if we reflect, for a moment, on the monstrous power over the conscience of the world, which the success of the undertaking would have delegated to the priests of Babel. Even a section of the scheme, as we shall afterwards find, was attended with appalling consequences in that respect. What would it have been if *the whole earth* had unanimously carried through such a work ? It might have begun in truth ; it might have been founded on just principles :—would either truth or justice have withstood the temptations to lust, and power, and worldly intrigue, which the possession of such a NAME would have offered even to the builders themselves, to say nothing of their remote successors ? We must be shallow observers of the history of man, if we could imagine such an establishment existing, without, in time, forming the nucleus of every corruption, and of the worst description of tyranny.

The account given of the frustration of the design strongly corroborates the view now offered. The probability of success God himself declared to consist in their unanimity, both of purpose and of lip. ‘Behold the people is one, and they have all one language.’ All, therefore, that divine wisdom sees requisite for impeding the work, is to mix or confuse that lip. Bishop Patrick gives a summary of the current guesses entertained of the nature of

this confusion, or 'mixing of the lip,' at Babel, when he says, that it consisted merely in 'varying the inflexions and terminations, as in different dialects, at the present day, of the same tongue.' But when was any important undertaking impeded by varieties of dialect or pronunciation? Does not the history of the world daily prove to us, that, when men are agreed in any scheme, differences of dialect or of tongue form no obstacle to their union? The cause given by the Bishop is not commensurate with the effect. We must enquire for one more capable of producing effects of such vast influence on the history of mankind.

As, in investigating into the nature of the building, so, in enquiring into the cause of its frustration, the first step is to notice a mistranslation into which our translators have been led, by the confined view they took of the meaning of the word 'lip.' They have put the decree for the hindrance of the work in these words: 'Let us there confound their language, that they may not *understand* one another's speech.' We appeal to any Hebrew scholar, and to every lexicon, whether there be in the sentence any word that can be translated *understand*. There is not. The literal translation is, 'Let us mix (or trouble) their lip, that a man shall not LISTEN to his neighbour's lip.'

Here we have a totally different, and a much more satisfactory cause for their dispersion. They would not *listen* to one another; they would not *hear*; in other words, they began to dispute; their lip was mixed; they no longer spoke the same

sentiments. 'God divided their tongues'—there was 'the strife of tongues within the city.' When 'God puts it into the heart of any to fulfil his will,' no mere difference of *language*, least of all 'dialects,' 'inflections,' and 'terminations,' produce difficulty in the accomplishment of it. But when it is his purpose to *scatter*, a man does not require his neighbour to give new terminations to his words, in order that he may have an excuse for turning a deaf ear to him! Experience teaches us every hour that there may be a Babel, and a determination not to *listen* to the *lip* of a neighbour, when there is no difference even of dialect amongst the speakers.

The builders of Babel began with great cordiality and unanimity. They all acknowledged the importance of the design; and they, probably, as in many other unions, entered into it with the most honest intention to sink all petty differences of opinion, all cavilling about *trifles*. Had the design been of God, the same unanimity which appeared at the commencement, would, as in the instances of the tabernacle and temple, have been maintained to the completion of the work. They would have been 'hid as in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.' But, destitute of the authority of heaven, it wanted that blessing which alone can give stability to any undertaking. They had advanced considerably with the work. The great building appears to have been reared; for it was the city alone which it is said 'they left off to build.' So long as the project existed but in theory, or so long as their attention was engaged by the progressive development of



new beauties in the great edifice, the oneness of lip and the readiness of ear continued. But there were points of discipline and of service to settle; servants to appoint, family interests to be consulted, in apportioning and laying out the city; and *then* it was that Heaven saw meet to 'divide their tongues in the city,' and 'they were broken into sects over all the earth.'

In the religious character of the union at Babel, and the religious nature of their disputes, we begin to obtain a satisfactory key to the family likeness which subsists between all religious systems throughout the world, as well as to the various shades of difference, of form and opinion, which characterised them at their first scattering, or which afterwards arose, through the influence of climate, customs, and occupations. In the union at Babel, and in the disunion, we also observe some important purposes of Heaven most remarkably subserved. It was the determined purpose of Heaven to leave all nations, for a time, to choose their own ways; but it was also a part of that purpose, 'in the fulness of time,' to summon the descendants of the early scattered nations to the bar of revelation; and to condemn them at that bar, of having '*changed the truth of God into a lie,*' so that '*every mouth* should be stopped and all the world become guilty before God.'

It cannot escape observation, that the bringing in afterwards of the verdict of guilty against the world, would lose much of its force, if it could not be demonstrated from revelation, that they *had*, at

one period, received and acknowledged the truth of God. Else how could they be accused of having *changed* it? How could it be said, when 'they *knew* God they glorified him not as God?' We see in this the reason for Divine Wisdom permitting mankind to advance so far with Babel; to give evidence, by this public union for a specific purpose, that there was a period when all mankind were AT ONE on religious matters; when the faith of Shem was confessed in the tabernacles of Japheth, and acknowledged in the tents of Ham: when '*all* the earth was of one lip and of one form of words.'

If heaven did not *inadvertently* (if the *term* can be used without profanity—the *idea* is too common) permit the progress of Babel to a certain point, but allowed it to go on for this specific and important purpose, much more does the interposition against it appear fraught with design. Had mankind been permitted to remain at one, then, however numerous the signs and figures by which the promise was to be foreshadowed, however wonderful, something like connivance might have been presumed—something like a cunningly devised fable have been alleged. But when mankind were not only dispersed into corners, but dispersed under circumstances which indicated the commencement of vain contentions and strifes, of difference of opinion and lip: when they were all allowed, apparently, to go every length in corrupting the truth which had been delivered to them: yet, when the fulness of the time was come, THAT TRUTH was again manifested which they had corrupted—mani-

festated differently from what they *all* anticipated ; yet so manifested as to prove itself to be the very truth they had changed—manifested so as to verify *the true signs* delivered to them ; and to prove even their vilest customs and vainest superstitions to have been corruptions of that which now unveiled all their deformity,—the most wonderful evidence was, thereby, publicly afforded, that the manifestation had come forth from ‘the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.’

In the following chapters it is our purpose to follow briefly, in the records of the chosen people, the development and corroboration of the true signs, by which, as we have seen, God instructed the fathers concerning his promises and purposes. Reverting, then, to the plain of Shinar, we shall endeavour to trace the corruptions of those signs which arose there, and their counterparts, or ‘resemblances in all the earth.’ And if, after that enquiry, we ascertain that a Book found its way to all nations, to the truth of which the very corruptions of the nations bore witness, we may indeed say that it came to them, and comes to us, with an authority at which the most sceptical may tremble. It brings assurance with it, that, as the truth concerning God himself, in very deed, dwelling with man on the earth, was, and is, the most important truth that ever was made known in heaven or on earth—so the testimony concerning it is accompanied by a body of evidence, such as attends no other fact of which the human mind is cognizable.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE PATH OF THE JUST.

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**ERE** proceeding to the enquiry proposed at the conclusion of the last chapter, it may be proper to notice, shortly, the origin of the people called **HEBREWS**—that chosen race, to whom God revealed himself, as he did to no other nation under heaven; among whose progeny ‘the path of the just’ was displayed, while the descendants of the other tribes, among whom the earth was divided, were left to choose their own ways.

There occurs, soon after the account of the deluge, this singular genealogical note regarding that people.

‘Unto Shem were sons born (he is the father of all the children of Eber, the brethren of Japheth the great).’

This early mention of ‘*ALL the children* of Eber, or Heber,’ distinctly points out the origin of the name of Hebrew, bestowed on Abraham and his descendants. Their close connection with Shem, alluded to in the note, must have been one of *profession*, rather than of family (for Eber was not

descended of Shem's oldest son); which is confirmed by the meaning of the word Heber, *a separatist*. This was the peculiar mark and characteristic of all who were afterwards called Hebrews, or children of Heber; they were *separatists*; they were 'not numbered with the nations.'

As all the names, in the line of the promised seed, were either doctrinal or prophetic, it is remarkable that Eber, who lived about the period of the Babel union, should have had a name given to him expressive of separation; and still more so, that he should have called his son 'Peleg (division), *because* in his days the earth was divided:' as if he, prophetically, anticipated the division to which the Babel confederacy would ultimately tend.

But the respect in which the note appears chiefly entitled to our notice here is this; that, in the very sentence in which the separation of the chosen people, as descendants of Shem and Heber, is prophetically mentioned,—so great care should be taken to remind that people that they were *brethren* of the Japhethites, or Gentile nations.

In this we see a very plain intimation that the separation of a peculiar people, in whom and to whom the promises were to be specially fulfilled, was a public act of God's providence, for a well understood purpose; and that the call and separation of Abram, for this end, was not an inexplicable proceeding at the time, nor the removal of a true worshipper away from an idolatrous people; but the setting apart of a family for the accomplishment of a generally anticipated design, in the fulfilment

of which *their brethren*, the Japhethites, were as deeply interested as they were.

Had Abram been called away from amongst idolaters, or corrupters of the true worship, he would not have been so anxious afterwards to procure from among them a wife for his son Isaac. God had hitherto, from the very beginning, chosen families, by whom the true worship was to be publicly observed and contended for. He now appears selecting publicly ('this thing was not done in a corner') an individual, to whom more explicit promises were to be given, and by whom lessons in the faith were to be exhibited, for instruction in righteousness in every age. These instructions were just as interesting to the Japhethites as to the children of Eber. The Japhethites, by whom the Isles of the sea were peopled, were, like the prodigal son, taking their departure; yet, ere they go, their participation in what was to be transacted in the family of Abraham, was secured to them, even by this early note in the genealogical record. Their brotherhood with the Heberites was not for ever cut off by Abram's separation. A time was afterwards to arrive, when those, who had been aliens from the promises, were to be made fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. The prodigal son was 'to come to himself,' through the preaching of the Apostles; to return, and seek his father's face; and the father, who had never forgotten him, was to say, 'It was meet we should make merry and be glad, for this MY SON was dead, and is alive again; he WAS LOST, and is found.'

When we proceed to trace, then, in the history of Abraham and his descendants, the mode by which God preached and illustrated his purposes to them, we must not think of these preachings as insulated and detached *glimpses* afforded them of some dark and mysterious matter, which neither they nor those around them knew the object or meaning of; but, rather, as 'fearful things in righteousness,' known and heard of throughout the world, which not only proved that 'the Lord God of Israel was God in heaven above and in the earth beneath,' but which 'made the hearts of the people melt' who heard of them.

Thus, in reading of Abram going away, at the command of God, to a land which He was to shew him,—going out, not knowing whither he went,—we see, in this, a great trial, as well as a strong indication of his faith in something not seen. But even, before he went, 'while he was still in Mesopotamia,' *the blessing* was as publicly spoken as *the call* was publicly made,—for several of his relations accompanied him. Abraham, then, and all who heard of the call might have been, and were, in great darkness, in respect to the place which he was afterwards to receive for an inheritance. His own faith, as well as that of his family and descendants, was greatly tried, while they sojourned in it, in tabernacles, and did not receive, during their lives, so much as to set their foot on; but they were in no doubt or darkness regarding the ultimate object of their separation. They looked for a city which hath the foundations, and 'they counted Him faithful who

had promised.' They met with many things to confirm them in this confidence in the Lord. The path of the just, in which they walked, was widened to them; and it shone more and more unto the perfect day. But every new confirmation they got, was just a further illustration of what had preceded. Their faith had been early founded on an acquaintance with the character and works and promises of God; and every trial of their faith issued in a confirmation of what they had learned and received. Abram no sooner reaches the promised land, than he rears *an altar*,—evidence of his faith in the atonement. This was not the act of one beginning to be instructed in the doctrine of Christ, but of one who had 'served him from his forefathers with pure conscience.' He gives *tithes* to Melchisedek, — evidence that the *Lord's portion* was then understood as well as under the law. He accounted that God was able to raise his son Isaac again from the dead;—an intimation that the doctrine of the resurrection was no new subject to Abram. He receives Isaac again from the dead '*in a figure*;'—a proof that figurative teaching was a mode of instruction which, from previous education, he was fitted to understand. He desires anxiously to know,—not that he *is* to inherit the land, for that he is often assured of,—but *how* the inheritance is to be obtained; and 'an horror of great darkness,' attending the sacrifice of the very animals and birds afterwards ordered by the law, through the pieces of which 'a smoking furnace and a lamp of fire passed,' was the remarkable figurative



preaching by which his request is answered. He dies, without having obtained any portion in the promised land, save *a burying place*;—the finest figurative preaching, as we shall afterwards find, of the hope of the resurrection, which is contained in all the Old Testament scriptures.

We have glanced at these few passages in the wonderful life of the father of the faithful, merely as specimens of the abundant proofs that might be brought, from the history of the wandering heirs of the promise, that their faith, which respected things not seen as yet, was founded on evidence regarding God and his gracious purposes; gathered from a previous acquaintance with the character and proceedings of Him who is light, and in him is no darkness at all. So well founded, so clear were the views they entertained of Him, that they all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off.

Having noticed these, both as establishing the continuous nature of God's revelation, and the figurative mode in which every new illustration and confirmation of His eternal purpose was made, we shall proceed to the more immediate object of our enquiry,—how far the signs employed, at first, to convey knowledge of Divine things, were continued in, and made instructive to, the seed of Israel?

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE SHINING LIGHT.

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THE sign or figure which first claims our attention, is that which stands connected, in the proverb, with 'the Path of the Just.' That path is said to be like 'the Shining Light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day.'

In the history of Abraham, which we have been considering,—and as much so, might it be observed in the histories of Isaac and Jacob, we see servants of the Lord placed in situations of great trial. Their minds were often darkened in regard to their present situation; yet, in the midst of these trials of their faith, that faith stood firm. They looked forward, with hope and confidence, to a time when God was to dwell in the tents of Shem, and to 'persuade (literally *open the door of faith to*) Japheth,' when there would be 'a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel.' They saw this 'day of Christ,' this dawning 'afar off'—'they saw it and were glad.'

The nature of this 'true light,' its more private as well more public manifestations, were preached

to the descendants of Abraham in many divers ways. When they were in Egypt, and darkness that might be felt encompassed all that land, 'the children of Israel had light in all their dwellings.' The Lord 'put a difference between them and the Egyptians;' he 'divided between the light and the darkness,' as he did at the first. In both cases we see the exercise of the same prerogative, the same sovereignty; and when the True Light came in person into 'spiritual Egypt, where he was crucified,' we find him revealing himself so to his disciples, in distinction from the world, that one of them said to him—'Lord, how is it that thou wilt MANIFEST thyself unto us, and not unto the world?'

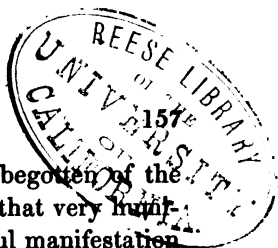
When that light, which illuminated the dwellings of the Israelites in Egypt, was concentrated in the Pillar of Fire, the meaning of the figure was thus beautifully expounded, in a reference made to it afterwards by one of the worshippers,—'O send forth *thy Light and thy Truth*, let them be guides to me.' That Pillar of the Truth was veiled in a cloud during the day: so when the day arrived that He, whom it prefigured, *descended*, 'he veiled his glory.' During the night of the Old Testament church, the types and prophecies, respecting the Messiah, were like the light from the Pillar; and they all testified of a brighter light that was to arise. Yet, when the morning of the promise came, the light was veiled in a cloud, 'the word was made flesh'—'he became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' But, even through that veil, 'we beheld

THE SHINING LIGHT.

his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' In that very humiliation lay the cause of the wonderful manifestation of glory which succeeded;—a ray from which, shining about Saul of Tarsus, was 'above the brightness of the noon-day sun.'

When God expounded his laws to Moses, on the top of Mount Sinai, a ray of the Divine light, lingering on the countenance of Moses, indicated that he had been in the presence of Him who is 'the fountain of light and life.' A veil was put over his face, which was taken away when he went in to speak with God, and was taken away from the reading of Moses when the True Light appeared. The light, therefore, that shone from the face of Moses, was a reflection from the presence of the Son of God upon the Mount; otherwise there would be neither beauty nor meaning in the fine argument which the Apostle Paul derives from the figure in 2 Cor. iii.

When the King, in Jeshurun, issued his lively oracles to Moses, or guided the councils of Israel, he shone forth from between the cherubim; or responded by the Urim and Thummim (lights and perfections) in the breastplate of the High Priest. This shining of the breastplate seems to be expounded by Paul, when he says, that 'by MANIFESTATION OF THE TRUTH, the Apostles commended themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.' This manifestation of the truth he immediately afterwards calls, 'the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God;' and



he sums up the exposition in this memorable saying, 'For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, IS HE WHO HATH shined in our hearts, with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.'

Lights were kept constantly burning in the tabernacle and temple. These were, 'the seven lamps of fire,' prefiguring, as they are explained in the Revelation, 'the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.' And as the testimony of that Spirit, during all the seven ages or periods of his church, has ever respected THE TRUTH, so the church of God, which maintains and upholds that truth, is compared to the candlestick which upheld the light. It is called, 'the PILLAR and STAY of THE TRUTH.'

These are a few of the ways in which the visible or material light was employed, at the time that all the constitution of the church was earthly, visible, and external, to illustrate the deep things of God; and these are a few, a very few of the references to them in the New Testament. Even from these few we may see, how greatly the New Testament worshippers are indebted to the material signs and ordinances of the Old Testament, not merely for the instruction in righteousness which they afford, but for a richness of imagery and illustration respecting heavenly things; which spiritual matters, without such figures, could never have been made intelligible to mortals.

But while the Lord never left himself without a light or lamp in Israel,—never without a public

testimony kept up by these material signs, in his professing church of old: yet the language of the inspired, among these worshippers, shewed that they only looked at these signs as testifying 'of another day,' 'THAT DAY' so much spoken of by the prophets. Hence the interest they took in the signs, which the finger of God had implanted in heaven, to assure his people on earth, that he was not unmindful of his promise. Hence the language of faith under the Old Testament was, 'I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say,' for the figure was so beautiful, the Psalmist loved to dwell on it, 'I say, more than they that watch for the morning.' What a fulfilment to the expectation of those who waited for the morning, was given, 'very early in the morning, as it began to dawn, towards the first day of the week!' What an answer to the prayers of the Old Testament in these words, 'He is not here. HE IS RISEN!'

It would form a volume of itself, to select all the passages of Scripture in which reference is made to the dawning of the day-star and the arising of the Sun of Righteousness; besides, the application of them to Him to whom all the prophets gave witness, is so undisputed, and we have so many less familiar figures to notice, that it would be occupying our limited space unnecessarily to dilate on such a subject.

There is one passage, however, which cannot be omitted, while touching on such a subject. The

sweet Psalmist of Israel, who had sung so often and so well of the hope of the morning of the resurrection, is about to lie down in the dust; and these are his last words: 'The Ruler over men, the Just One, ruling in the fear of God, shall be as the light of the morning, even a morning without clouds: as the tender grass out of the earth; as the clear shining after rain.' David, like Abraham, saw no prospect of the accomplishment of this to himself, in this world of sin and sorrow; therefore he adds, 'although my house be not so with God,' yet I am not disheartened: the covenant with me looks beyond this earth, it is 'everlasting, ordered in every part and sure: for this is all my salvation and all my desire, though he make it not to grow:—it may not spring forth here; but there is a morning coming, after the rain, after all storms are away, and the winter past and gone, when 'thy sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw her shining; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.'

The hope of the dawning of the Sun of Righteousness, and the morning of the resurrection, influenced the Old Testament Church to set the New the example of 'showing forth the loving kindness and mercy of the Lord in the morning.' But not only did the light of every new morning bring God's mercy to remembrance; the periods when the sun entered his different chambers or divisions of the heavens—the rising of his harbinger, the morning-star—and many other appearances of the heavenly

luminaries, were counted illustrative of the same memorial. The times, too, when the light of the new moon appeared, reflecting the splendour of the sun, were all of interest to them in a typical point of view. Hence the careful adaptation of their feasts, to the periods when there were new exhibitions, as it were, of light in the heavens; and the appearance of that light was always hailed with joy.

So intimately united, indeed, were the ideas of *joy* and *light* together, in their minds, that almost all the words in their language expressive of joy and gladness, were from the same roots with the words expressive of the emanation or bursting forth of light. The very stringed instruments they employed had names derived from the same source. The word which signifies PRAISE, means also to shoot forth like the beams of the sun! and their sacred dance, in which joy and triumph were more rapturously expressed than in any other of their observances, was ordered so as to bear a marked allusion to the springing forth of light. Thus when they 'praised him in the dance,' they praised him by a figure which had an express reference to that time 'when the lame man should leap like an hart;' and when they 'praised him on an instrument of six strings,' they praised him on a figurative emblem, as its name implied, of the resurrection. Thus we find even the music of the Old Testament was figurative; and instruments introduced, not merely to assist the voices of the congregation, but



to preach, by signs, the hope of that time, 'when mourning shall be turned into dancing, and sack-cloth into gladness.'

Although the meaning of all the splendid figurative applications of light, under the Old Testament, will only be fully understood at the 'morning without clouds,' when 'they of the city shall spring up like the grass of the earth;' yet a wonderful key was given to them when John the Baptist came, like the morning star, prefacing the appearance of the full orb of day. These manifestations 'gave the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the DAY SPRING from on high hath visited us: to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the region and shadow of death: to guide our feet into the way of peace.'

Slightly as we have touched this most rich and interesting part of the Jewish Economy, or the spirit of it as developed in the New Testament, we have, we trust, adduced enough to prove, that so copious a use of the figure of light, in a ritual, in poetry, and in prophecy proceeding directly from heaven, and verified by God himself visiting man on the earth,—so apt an emblem, capable of such varied, such inexhaustible applications, could not have existed, if it had not been PREPARED by Divine Wisdom, for this purpose, when the ordinances of heaven were established. And, we may add, as the intimate connection between the language they used, and a figure so variously and effectively intro-

**duced, subsisted from the first, and lay at the very root and origin of the sacred speech,—so we are warranted in considering, that, from Adam to Christ, the same figure was illustrative of the same hope, and would preach the Gospel as intelligibly to Noah as it did to David.**

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE BRANCH.

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A PASSAGE, quoted in the preceding chapter, is accompanied by a marginal reading, in the English translation of the Bible, which will account for what may at first appear, from the title of this chapter, a sudden transition from one subject to another of a very different nature. The passage referred to, is from the words of Zecharias ; who, in anticipating the coming of the Messiah, says, ‘whereby *the day spring* from on high hath visited us.’ The margin, instead of *day spring*, renders it ‘THE BRANCH.’ This choice between two words, apparently so dissimilar, arises from a peculiarity in the sacred language, briefly adverted to in a former chapter, to which, and some of its applications, we must now revert.

It was then noticed, that the elements of language sprung from *verbs*, expressive of the great operations of nature; and that, when it was desired to represent, hieroglyphically, such operations, some object or objects in nature were chosen, the properties, or appearances, or names of which, identified

them in some manner or other with the action, or thing, which was to be represented or explained. Thus, although the springing forth of *light* could not be represented, there were natural objects which *shot forth* like the light, and they seem to have been chosen to represent it. We do not mean to affirm that this was the only reason for such objects being chosen; it might have been owing to something, in the name or nature of them, connected with some power or property in the language, now unknown to us; but, from whatever cause it arose, there were certain natural objects chosen, to represent the emanation of light, and, hence, naturally, to symbolize that of which light itself was a figure.

Amongst the objects chosen to symbolize light and its antetypes, those most frequently used were branches of trees and shrubs; (which, as well as the light, were said to *spring*;) rods or staffs formed of those branches; and horns, probably from their springing or shooting forth like branches.

Respect seems to have been had to the nature or appearances of the trees, from which the branches were taken, according to the doctrine to be taught, the feeling or emotion to be described. Those which drooped or bent towards the earth, were used as emblems of death or sorrow—of darkness or hiding of the light: those which shot upwards, of joy and life. There was also, as already frequently noticed, something in their names, and qualities as expressed by these names, which in some way, inexplicable to us, but evidently well understood by the

wise-hearted of old, rendered the instruction conveyed by them peculiarly forcible. Thus, when Solomon is said to have 'spoken of trees, from the cedar in Lebanon to the hyssop which springeth on the wall,' we are not to understand merely that he was a botanist; but that he was instructed, and was able to instruct, in the parabolic use of all those objects. Hence the amazing number of his parables, of which only a small portion have come down to us in the book of Proverbs.

The emblematic, figurative, or prophetic use of trees, under the Old Testament dispensation, cannot be better illustrated than by one passage in the Prophets, where the coming of the Holy and Just One is spoken of. At that time, the Prophet says, 'the oil of joy was to be given for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified;' and he concludes his ecstatic reference to that period in these words: 'For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to *spring forth*, so the Lord God will cause Righteousness and Praise to *spring forth* before all nations.'

Seeing from this, and a thousand other passages which might be quoted, that the figurative and emblematical uses of trees, begun in the garden of Eden, was continued in the after ages of the church; and seeing, that by them was expressed, hieroglyphically and metaphorically, the hope of life, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ again

from the dead,—we are left at no loss as to the meaning of the introduction of branches of trees, on occasions of rejoicing; but, above all, their introduction at those set periods, or feasts, which preached, or foreshewed, ‘the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath promised by the mouth of all his prophets since the world began.’ These feasts were figurative, so were the branches which were then carried aloft. Each bore its own beautiful allusion; and if we are not satisfied with the assurances of the prophets, that those allusions were to the springing forth of righteousness and praise, at the morning of the resurrection, we may look back to the ark resting on mount Ararat; and think whether Noah, when he beheld the dove, bringing an olive branch in her mouth from the new world, would not read something, in that touching and beautiful figure, of amazing meaning and comfort to those who had been ‘buried’ in *such* ‘a baptism,’ and were now awaking, as it were, to newness of life.

We observe, also, from this beautiful use of the branch, as an emblem of the light of the Gospel, and of the peace on earth, good will towards man, which it was expected to bring,—why branches were carried by ambassadors and messengers of peace; and why they were borne as emblems of victory and symbols of salvation.

As branches were emblematical of ‘light and life, and joy and peace,’ so the rod or staff, formed of them, retained the same meaning, and often represented the Word of God, from which all life and hope proceeds. ‘Jacob, when he was a-dying,

bowed himself on the top of *his staff*;' acknowledging the support which the Word of God had been to him in all his wanderings, and the hope of the resurrection, of which the staff was a sign. David leant on the same *staff*, when he looked forward to passing through the valley of the shadow of death: 'thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' The rods of Moses and Aaron wrought miracles, symbolical of those wonders which the Word of God performs. Aaron's dry rod 'budded and brought forth almonds;' figurative of the fruit which was to spring from Him who was prophesied of as 'THE BRANCH;' who appeared as a 'root out of the dry ground;' but 'THE ROD of whose strength was to *shoot forth* out of Zion,' rendering the wilderness a fruitful field.

There was also a very curious connection between the words or phrases, expressive of shooting forth, and those words which meant to instruct, which gave wonderful effect to some of the uses of these emblems. The word which signifies *to govern*, means also *to teach by parables*. When the rod or sceptre was placed in the hand of a king, it not only intimated that he was to guide his people in the way of peace, but that he was their *instructor* as well as their ruler. Those kings who sat on the typical throne of the Messiah, were constantly reminded, by the sceptre which they held, that their office was typical. The sceptre intimated something yet to spring forth, which it was their duty to instruct their people in,—even the coming of that king, 'the sceptre of whose kingdom was to be a

sceptre of righteousness, and *the sceptre* (literally, *the instruction concerning the hope of light and life*) was not to depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until SHILOH (the Irradiator, the Shiner Forth) came, and unto him the gathering of the people was to be.'

Even at the court of Ahasuerus we may learn something of the instruction which the sceptre conveyed. 'All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king, into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death; except such to whom the king *shall hold out the golden sceptre* that he may live.' If we read tyranny in the first part of this decree, there is surely the finest figure of that which may be called '*sovereign mercy*,' in the holding out of that which denoted, by its very name, Mercy and Peace!

Nearly the same figurative ideas and lessons, that were conveyed by the branch and the sceptre, were included in the hieroglyph of the horn. The root from which the word horn is derived, means to emit or send forth beams of light, to rejoice, and to be exalted. Hence horns were figurative not only of power, but of the shooting forth or preaching of good news. When the Prophet, therefore, is describing the coming of Him who brought life and immortality to light, he spake of Him as having 'horns coming out of his hands.'

The great subject of the prophecy of old, being the triumph of the light and truth of God over all



its enemies, we see it referred to in such figurative expressions as these: 'in my name shall his horn be exalted;' 'my horn shalt thou exalt like the unicorn;' 'his righteousness endureth for ever: his horn shall be exalted with honour;' 'all the horns of the wicked will I cut off.' All pretensions to this truth—all false lights and doctrines—shall be put out; 'but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.' And in allusion to the triumph and power of the Gospel, among the Gentile nations, it is prophesied of Him who was to be separated from his brethren, 'his horns are like the horns of an unicorn; with them he shall push the people together from the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim.' (Ephraim meaning literally, 'the fullness of the Gentiles.')

Horns and branches, being emblems of this glorious irradiation, or shining forth of truth, were placed around the heads of those who typified Him 'whose countenance shone as the sun.' Of the same irradiation the spicæ or pikes of the crown were figurative. Thus the glorified church, which is to arise like the light on the morning of the resurrection, is to be 'a royal diadem in the hand of her God.'

As all these emblems prefigured the power and influence of the light of the Gospel, so the flowers and fruits with which they were often accompanied, typified the effects of that Gospel, and the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Hence, when the prophet anticipates the time, when 'the branch of the Lord should be beautiful and glorious,' he says,

‘the fruit of the earth shall then be excellent and comely.’ Looking at the earthly temple as figurative of the heavenly, we hence understand why palm trees, *opening* flowers (opening to the day), knops of flowers, and pomegranates were the decorations of it; and why a pomegranate should have been placed between each of the bells, in the hem of the garment of the high priest; those bells which gave forth ‘the joyful sound,’ as he was heard entering the holy place.

In these few references to one class of the hieroglyphics, by which the hope of the promise was illustrated to the Old Testament worshippers, we have just a few of the inexhaustible store of proofs, which might be adduced from the Scriptures, that the language which God gave for perpetuating the memory of his covenant, and for keeping alive the hope of the promise, was, at the first, so connected with the natural objects with which creation was stored, as to fit them for aiding and illustrating each other in the most important, the most heavenly purpose, to which they could be applied.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE DOUBLE.

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It is very generally thought that, although the Jews and other ancient nations had the hope and expectation of a Messiah, and of many blessings that were to attend his advent—yet that their ideas with regard to the nature of these blessings, in particular in respect to the hope of eternal life, through Him, were of a very vague and indeterminate nature.

Of all the mistakes respecting the opinions of those who ‘saw the promises afar off, and *embraced them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth’—this is the most melancholy and the most absurd. We trust it is scarcely necessary to enter on a systematic proof of the absurdity of it, to those who have given due consideration to the subjects we have already had under investigation. But as we have, particularly in the two preceding chapters, directed attention to the existence and copious use of figures indicating the hope of a bright and a glorious period, rather than to *the time* and *mode* of its fulfilment, it may not be unacceptable to trace these more closely. We do so the more readily, as the enquiry will lead to the

consideration of another metaphor, borrowed from a phenomenon in nature, frequently used in the Old Testament, which is as beautiful as it is conclusive, respecting the nature of the ancient hope of the Scriptures.

The first circumstance which must arrest the attention of every impartial enquirer into this matter is, the persuasion, nay, the certainty, which seemed in the minds of those who lived 'by faith,' that the glorious things hoped for, and looked forward to, were not to be fulfilled to them *in this life*. Abraham never could have expected to live to see his seed 'as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.' Joseph said, 'I die, but God shall surely visit you.' David, on his death bed, was as full of the expectation respecting 'his Son and Lord' as he was in his youth. Can the most prejudiced reader of the histories of these men seriously believe that they took so much interest in a matter *in which they were not personally to share?*

Did we know nothing more, then, of their faith and hope, than that it respected something to be accomplished after they were in their graves, we have sufficient evidence that they knew the promises in Christ to have an aspect beyond death and the grave.

But, it may be said, that the passages we have alluded to, in their histories, and in their sayings, merely indicate that they knew of the immortality of the soul, and that we may suppose, from these passages, although it is little more than supposition, that they had some faint ideas respecting a world of

spirits—a heaven, to which their souls would go, and where the trials of this life would be compensated for by eternal happiness.

We appeal to the understanding of *men*, whether all their acts do not, much more distinctly, indicate a hope of something *future*. If they merely had some vague ideas about the immortality of the soul, in what respect could a distant event, to be transacted *on this earth*, have been of so much interest to them? Their whole conduct manifested an expectation of having a participation in the joy and gladness which the springing forth of the light was *afterwards* to produce; a participation they *could not* have had, if their spirits were never again to be re-united to their bodies. Yea, much more than a vague idea, on this subject, do their acts and sayings testify:—they testify that it was made known to them, that, out of the grave, life was to arise. Thus it was to ‘the resurrection of the just, the twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hoped to come.’

‘THE RISING FROM THE DEAD,’ first of the Propitiation himself, and then of the people, was preached to the fathers in many divers ways. The *ascension* of the smoke of the sacrifice to heaven, was one of the proofs of its acceptance. Abraham received his son Isaac (the figurative propitiation) again *from the dead* in a figure. The light, the unceasing witness and figure of Him who was to come, *rose* out of darkness. Many of their ceremonies and customs indicated plainly, that distress, sorrow, and death were to precede the rising of the light of life

out of obscurity. At certain periods of darkness, the whole nation was plunged in sorrow and clothed in sackcloth, which was changed into tumultuous joy when the light re-appeared; and branches and other figurative emblems of the Shiloh (the Branch, the Irradiator) were then held aloft, preaching, as plainly as signs could do, *His* deliverance from death; while the participation of all the people, in the joy as well as sorrow on these occasions, indicated their hope of a share in the resurrection, as certainly as they were to participate in the death. Pillars, rising out of the earth (emblems of the resurrection), were placed over graves. Trees, shrubs, and flowers, also emblematic of the same thing, were placed over them.

In these, and a thousand other figurative ways, the hope of the resurrection was taught of old. But there was one metaphor in particular, borrowed from a phenomenon in nature, which entered into the composition of many words in the ancient language, and expressed, perhaps more distinctly than any other, the precise nature of their expectation concerning the life to come.

The phenomenon to which we refer, is the change which is seen to take place on some creatures which pass into a torpid state, ere 'renewing their youth,' and re-appearing in greater beauty and splendour. This is seen, the most conspicuously, in the worm passing into the state of chrysalis; re-appearing in plumage, 'covered with silver and feathers of yellow gold,' and winging its way toward heaven.

From this beautiful and expressive *picture*, afforded, in nature, of the resurrection, there are many words and forms of expression borrowed in the primitive language; by which the ancients described the nature of *the changes* which man's body undergoes, and is to undergo; just as distinctly as Paul, when he says, 'it is sown in dishonour, it is *raised* in power: it is sown a natural body, it is *raised* a spiritual body.'

Job describes these changes. The first change is, 'Thou *changest* the countenance of man, and sendest him away.' This is the execution of the sentence, 'dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.' But he says, after this first change has taken place, 'O! that thou wouldest hide me *in the grave*, that thou wouldst keep me secret, until thy wrath be past; that thou wouldst appoint me a *set time (there)* and *remember me* (in the grave). Though a man die, yet shall he live. All the days of my appointed time (the set time in the grave) will I wait, till MY CHANGE come.'

We must here notice, that the word expressive of this second change, is quite different from the word denoting the first change or sending away. The second change means *a renewing, a turning back again, a sprouting*. It is *the very word* used in the 7th verse of the same chapter, where he says, 'there is hope of a tree, though it be cut down, that it will *sprout again*.' And that the change he was looking forward to, and was to wait for in the grave, was the resurrection of the body, is put beyond doubt, by what follows, 'Then thou shalt call and I will

answer thee.' Was ever the hope concerning 'the voice of the archangel and the trump of God,' more clearly expressed than it is here? Were the views of this man vague or undefined, or were the people for whom his history was written uninformed on the subject of the resurrection, when such a declaration as this was recorded—'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand on the earth in the latter days; and though, after my decease, worms destroy this body, yet *in my flesh* I shall see the Lord; whom I shall see for myself and not another'?

This change and re-change—this doubling up and unfolding again, is beautifully described in one of the psalms: 'Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou *change them*, (the *first* change, admirably translated by the Apostle, 'as a vesture shalt thou *fold them up*') and they shall BE CHANGED.' The *second* change, the *unfolding* from the weakness of old age to newness of life. In another psalm he describes the awaking from this 'folding up'; 'I shall be satisfied *when I awake* with thy likeness.'

It is delightful, on turning from David to Moses, to find that great prophet refuting, in two words, the eight volumes written to prove he knew nothing of the resurrection. After setting forth the eternity and godhead of ADONAI, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the 90th psalm, (which is a prayer of Moses, the



man of God,) he says, 'thou *turnest* man to destruction,' (the first change;) 'again, thou sayest, *RETURN*, ye children of men.' How, or when? '*Because* a thousand years are in thy sight but as yesterday when it is passed.' Beautifully is *this return* from the grave commented on by an apostle long afterwards, in these words, 'Beloved, be not ignorant of one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day: *the Lord is not slack concerning his promise.*' What promise? His second coming, when 'those who *sleep* in Jesus will God bring with him;' and although 'we shall not all die, we shall all **BE CHANGED.**'

It is truly refreshing, that, even in a translation, it was not possible to destroy the antithesis in the prayer of Moses, above quoted, between the *turn* and the *return*. It stands, even in our English Bibles, a majestic and dignified reproof from the prophet, like to whom there arose not another in Israel—a reproof addressed to all who can imagine that he, who spake face to face with the Prince of Life, as a man speaketh to his friend—that he who penned so large a portion of inspiration, should have been ignorant of *that for which Revelation was given*—the hope of the Resurrection.

Yea, Moses would have been inexcusable indeed, if he could have penned what he did, respecting, not merely Enoch, but Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and yet have remained in ignorance of *the only thing that could explain their conduct*—the hope of rising again from the dead.

To Abraham it was said, '*the land which thou SEEST, to thee* will I give it.' Abraham knew well he was not to get it in this life. What did he do? He *bought*, carefully bought and secured to himself and his family, A BURYING PLACE in it.

It may be said, that, if Abraham had been properly instructed in the doctrine of the resurrection, he would have known that if he was to inherit that land at the resurrection, God could accomplish his promise to him wherever his body was laid. True. But Abraham was a preacher of righteousness, as well as Noah—a public preacher. By what public act could Abraham have shewn his belief, that the promise would be made good to him at the resurrection, so well or so distinctly, as by purchasing a right of burial in the land to himself and his family?

But to place the meaning of what he did beyond a doubt, observe *the name* of the burial place, *Machpelah*, THE UNFOLDING OR DOUBLING BACK AGAIN. We should really think that any descendant of Abraham, who doubted the hope which Abraham preached when he purchased Machpelah, may have been a fleshly son, but could scarcely have had 'like precious faith' with his ancestor. How his immediate believing descendants understood it, is evident, from Jacob's words to his sons, 'and he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron, the Hittite; in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which

Abraham bought with the field of Ephron, the Hittite, for *a possession of a burying place*. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.' It is observable, that as Jacob could not bury Rachel in Machpelah, he placed a pillar, the emblem of the resurrection, over the grave.

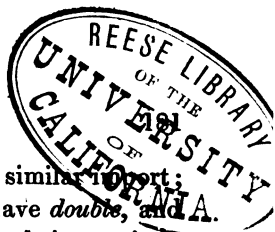
Joseph was a partaker of the same faith, and preached the same hope. His only anxiety on his death bed was, that his bones should rest in Machpelah, 'and he took *an oath* of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry my bones up from hence.'

The hope of the unfolding again to glory after being sown in dishonour—this double change—explains some passages in the prophets which are otherwise dark. In one passage it is said, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, speak to the heart of Jerusalem—say to her, that her sins are pardoned, that her warfare is accomplished, for she has received of the Lord's hand *double* for all her iniquities.' To suppose that this means, she had been punished *doubly* by Him who dealeth not with us according to our transgressions, is to put very unusual language into the mouth of a prophet of the Lord. The idea conveyed in the original is, 'she had received of the Lord's hand *a doubling up* of all her transgressions'—an action expressive of that folding up so as to hide and obliterate stains, which shall not re-appear when the double or second change takes place—at that time 'when the iniquity of Jacob shall be *sought for* and shall *not be found*.'

## THE DOUBLE.

There are many other passages of similar import: such as, 'For your shame, ye shall have *doubts*, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore, in their land they shall possess *the double*, everlasting joy shall be unto them.' It must be evident, even from this imperfect translation, that in this quotation the period of 'the double' or second change was expected at the resurrection. In the original, to which no translation could do justice, it is, in every case where the expressions occur, so clear, as to put the hope of the ancient people of God in the rising from the dead beyond all question.

It is manifest, then, from the figures, from the types, from the metaphorical as well as the explicit language of the Old Testament, that the resurrection of the just, through the rising of the Messiah from the dead, was the hope which animated and supported the patriarchs, priests, and prophets of old. This hope was neither vaguely nor darkly expressed. If it appear to us to have been but seldom brought forward, it is only because the language we use cannot convey to us, in a translation, the force of the similitudes by which it was preached. 'O my people, I will open your graves;' 'after three days I shall raise you up'; 'together with my dead body shall they arise;' are sayings, which, if we could enter fully into the spirit and meaning of the sacred language and its figures, we should find re-echoed in all their preachings, illustrated and enforced in all their worship. The hope therein expressed is the key to all their customs;



without it their actions appear irrational, their words idle sounds, and their ceremonies superstition the most degrading. Take it away, and the Scriptures become a dead letter;—restore it, and we see them ‘THE ORACLES OF LIFE!’

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE BURNING BUSH.

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WHEN the Church of God obtained, for a typical purpose, an earthly inheritance, and became a nation of priests, all their service consisted in carnal ordinances;—the weapons of their warfare were carnal, and the ‘meats and drinks’ of the sanctuary ministered to the wants of the body, while the typical intention of them cheered and invigorated the mind.

Among the institutions of the sanctuary, the cherubim held a distinguished place. In conformity with the rest of the decorations, they were of man’s *workmanship*: they were made out of the same piece of gold that formed the mercy seat. Yet, even although so framed, they appeared in the midst of fire, when God inhabited them and spoke from the SCHECHINAH. This appearance of fire around them was visible, as formerly noticed, at Eden, and in the spiritual visions of Ezekiel.

A few remarks on the meaning of that fiery appearance, is the design of this chapter, preparatory to a closer investigation of the figures which it enveloped.

There were three different operations and developments of the light recognised in the ancient theology and philosophy. The first was the shining forth or emanation of the light, as from the sun. The second, the hidden or secret pervasion of that heat through all nature. The third, its concentration and development again, in the form of flame.

The first we have already largely referred to. As it prefigured the emanation of life, from Him who is the Fountain Head of Light and Life, so the other operations were looked upon as illustrating the effects of his Word, which is truth itself. The LAT, or hidden effect, (whence the Latin *lateo*, the English *latent*, &c.) was considered illustrative of the inward or secret operations of the Word of God; and was sometimes designated by words signifying to vivify, to comfort, &c. The concentration of this hidden heat, and manifestation as fire or flame, was connected rather with words applicable to purification or testing, as of metals in a furnace.

The connexion between all these operations and expressions, as applied to natural things, indicated an early and a perfect acquaintance with that universal distribution and operation of the electric fluid throughout nature, which is again *beginning* to be made the basis of scientific knowledge and research. Such a circumstance cannot be passed, without noticing the tribute, so unconsciously paid, to the philosophy of the Scriptures; the attestation so forcibly given to the words of Solomon, that 'there is nothing new under the sun.'

The connexion between the same operations, as

explanatory of spiritual matters, gave also great simplicity and force to the illustrations it afforded. As light was the emblem of TRUTH, so all the other operations were the effects of that truth. The truth of God shone forth; it also vivified and comforted inwardly, and worked unseen by man; and even when it came forth as *fire*, to purify, to test, and to consume, it was still THE SAME TRUTH. Thus God is a 'God of Love,' and the 'God of all Peace;' but he is also 'a Consuming Fire.' These characters and attributes are one and the same. In his truth his love is seen. The same truth gives that peace which the world cannot take away. The same truth consumes every thing *perishable* which it reaches. The God of Truth never varies, never appears under different characters. He and his word are always the same. The truth which quickens is the truth which purifies. The Judge of all the Earth makes the truth which he disseminates, as the light, the test by which his judgment is to proceed.

We observe in this another instance of the peculiar *aptness* of all God's creations to illustrate the great truth contained in his revelations. We behold in this another confirmation of what has been advanced, that creation was made, as we see it, that it might illustrate the invisible things of God.

The fire, being looked upon as figurative of the searching and purifying nature of the truth of God, explains the remarkable question and answer of the prophet, 'Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with ever-



lasting burnings? *He that walketh in righteousness and speaketh uprightness.* Righteousness, even the righteousness of God; truth, even the truth of God, can alone stand the test of that fire which is righteousness and truth itself. When that fire descended and consumed the sacrifice, it taught two important lessons. It taught that the fire was to come down on the sacrifice, instead of coming down on the head of the guilty worshipper; while the consumption of the sacrifice shewed that a better offering was required to stand the devouring fire. That offering was found, when the Son of God was led as a lamb to the slaughter. When the fire took hold of him, under which he expired on the cross, it declared him to be *the Substitute* looked for and required. But 'his righteousness it sustained him.' He came out unhurt from the ordeal. Death had no power over him; 'it was not possible that he could be holden of it.' His death manifested him to be the 'Chosen One,' the true substitute on which sin was to be visited: his resurrection declared him the Eternal and Unchangeable Truth and Word of God.

Fire was also used of old to denote trials and afflictions; but these were trials connected with the truth. Even in the New Testament, *since* the fire visited the substitute, there is a 'fiery trial' spoken of; but it is called 'the trial of your *faith*, being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, may be found unto honour and glory and praise, at the appearing of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.'

When Moses is about to be sent to Egypt, where the people of God were 'in the furnace' of affliction, he is led to the back of Horeb, and there he sees 'a bush burning with fire, yet not consumed.' He 'turns aside to see this great sight, how the bush was *not consumed*'; and he finds the cause of it to be that God was in the bush. He is thus instructed how the church and people of Israel were to be preserved in all their wanderings and trials, in that very mountain; because 'the Lord was to be in the bush;' 'the Lord her God was to be with her, and the shout of her king *in the midst of her*.'

When Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego were cast into the fiery furnace, they were, to the astonishment of the king and his courtiers, seen walking in the midst of the fire, unhurt. The cause is explained, just as it was to Moses at Sinai: 'the form of the fourth walking with them in the fire, was the form of the Son of God.'

Wherever the Son of God and his truth are found, that fire is innocuous; but the same fire which preserves the truth and purifies its worshippers, burns up all the enemies to that truth, as it did those who cast the three children into the flames.

We see, then, why the Cherubim, which represented the Truth of God and the body professing it, are described as being 'in the midst of the involving fire.' 'The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord: thou shalt preserve him—every one of them, from this genera-

tion.' Yea, even in times when 'the vilest of the sons of men are exalted,' and infidelity lifts up her voice 'on every side.'

Ere we close this chapter, let us look back to the east of Eden, and picture to ourselves the scene there, on any of the appointed days on which offerings were brought to the presence of the God who appeared dwelling between the Cherubim.

We see a family bringing a lamb for a burnt-offering. The heads of that family are still trembling under the divine displeasure. A curse has been pronounced on them, and they are uncertain when or how the death, which that curse bore, would come down on their guilty heads. They are coming into the presence of the God they have offended, whose presence is denoted by the involving fire, and they know not but it may be a bolt from that very fire which is to execute upon them the judgment recorded. They lay the bleeding victim upon the altar, and the lightning which they feared, and which might justly have struck them, consumes the innocent and unoffending lamb. The name of that lamb is *a substitute*. They are thus relieved in their consciences; being taught that the fire of divine justice is to be turned aside to an innocent substitute; while the promise, respecting the seed of the woman, plainly directs them to him, as the lamb which God was to provide to himself as a burnt-offering.

But a very wonderful object now attracts their attention. In the midst of the fire, a single spark from which would strike them dead, and the power

of which on the substitute they have just witnessed, in the midst of that fire they see *living creatures* moving up and down; not only uninjured, but having voices, and 'resting not day nor night saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come.'

Let the reader, who has duly weighed the reasons, formerly assigned, for considering *the* Cherubim at Eden, in the tabernacle, the temple, and in the visions of Ezekiel and John, to have been the same—let him picture to himself such an appearance meeting the eyes of Adam—and then try to persuade himself that such would be *unmeaning symbols* to Him who had given names to the forms of which it was composed!

Adam and his sons *must* have understood them well. By us, who can only obtain an imperfect key to the language which explained them, they can only be but faintly appreciated. Yet the descriptions of them, and the references to them, in the Bible, are so explicit, as containing in figure that which constituted THE GLORY of the Old Testament Church, that we are encouraged, under that title, to inquire more particularly into the nature of the instruction conveyed by them.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE GLORY.

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IN the preceding, as well as in the 6th chapter, some circumstances were stated, which seemed to authorise us to consider the Cherubim as a hieroglyphical representation of the Truth, and of the body, the Church, which maintains it. We purpose examining these authorities more closely in this chapter. In doing so, it is not our purpose to offer a critical *translation* of the hieroglyphics; for the language which contained the key to them has lain too long dormant to permit access, in all cases, to the primitive ideas from which it sprung. We purpose, therefore, merely to advert to some circumstances, in addition to those formerly noticed, which seem to justify the view then taken of the truths contained, or preached, in the Cherubic emblems; and to adduce other references and uses of the figures which incontestibly *prove* them to have been symbolical of the glorified body of Christ—the Church.

The Cherubim are denominated, by Paul, ‘the Cherubim of *Glory*.’ This title is very appropriate, for they were called ‘THE GLORY’ of the Old Tes-

tament church. When the ark, on which they rested, was taken by the Philistines, '*Ichabod—the Glory* is departed,' was the cry in Israel. When the Psalmist is celebrating, under the type of Christ, his deliverance from suffering, he uses, on more occasions than one, a phrase, which receives great elucidation by applying it to the Cherubic representation of his glorified body. In one place he says, that his mourning is to be turned into joy, 'to the end that THE GLORY may sing praise unto thee, *and never be silent.*' Accordingly the Cherubim are described as '*resting not day nor night,*' 'giving glory, honour, and thanks to him that sat on the throne.' On another occasion he says, 'therefore my heart is glad, and *my Glory* rejoiceth:' and, again, we find him calling on the glorified body to give thanks, in these terms—'Awake up, *my Glory!*' Ezekiel expressly calls the Cherubim 'the appearance of the Glory of the Lord.'

As 'the Glory of God was to be made great in HIS SALVATION,' we may expect to find that Salvation declared, or preached, in any figurative representation to which *the name of* GLORY is applied in this manner; as well as to recognise, in that same representation, a fit emblem of the saved or glorified body.

Accordingly, the first and most striking combination in the Cherubim, is A LION AND A MAN on the right side. The phrase used by the Apostle Paul, 'the fulness of the Godhead bodily,' is almost a literal translation of this combination of figures: tantamount, as formerly noticed, to another expres-

sion of the same writer, 'God manifested in the flesh.'

THE EAGLE, 'the winged messenger of heaven,' had an evident aspect to 'the ministration of angels:' and it is impossible to quote these words, 'seen of angels,' which form part of the Mystery of Godliness, without calling to remembrance the expression, 'eagle-eyed,' borrowed in modern language from the same hieroglyphic.

That THE OX was figurative of the preaching and spread of the Gospel, is manifest from many passages. The power of the Gospel in gathering the multitudes of the nations together, has already been noticed, as having been prophesied of by Moses under the figure of 'horns;' in a passage wherein it is remarkable that this expression should occur, 'His glory is the firstling of his bullock.' Thus, 'preached unto the Gentiles, and believed on in the world,' was a part of the mystery of godliness under the Old Testament as well as under the New; and Paul does not scruple to apply the figurative language respecting the Oxen of old, to himself and his fellow workmen, who 'trod out the corn,' or rightly divided the word of truth. Thus, in the prayer of the psalmist, for the prosperity of the Church, it is petitioned that 'our oxen may be strong for work.'

WINGS were the hieroglyph of the Spirit. When the Spirit came down and 'abode' on the Son of God, it was 'in a bodily shape *like a dove*;' and when the ark, which was overshadowed by the wings of the cherubim, is addressed in the 68th

psalm, it is in these words, 'though ye have lien among the pots, *ye wings of a dove*, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.' These wings not only overshadowed the mercy seat, but they 'stretched upwards : ' the figure of ASCENSION.

Under the wings there was THE HAND OF A MAN ; the figure universally used, throughout the Scriptures, for *help* or *salvation*. 'The arms of his hands were made strong by the mighty God of Jacob.' 'The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the sight of all nations : and all ends of the earth have seen *the salvation* of our God.' 'Let his hands be sufficient for him, and be thou a help from his enemies.' 'Let thy hand rest on *the Man of the right hand*.'

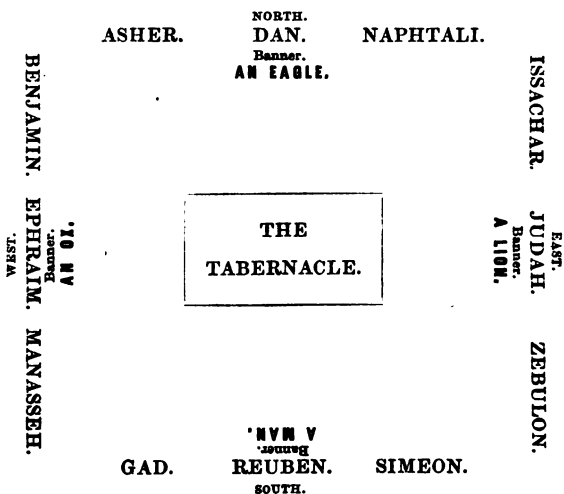
These few references will bring many others to mind, in which the figures seen in the Cherubim are used, throughout the scriptures, to illustrate the Mystery of Godliness, or the Salvation of our God.

As that salvation was the glory of the church, so the church, maintaining it, was the glory of Christ. So intimate was the union, that the same figure described both. The church of Christ was ever known by her doctrine : THAT DOCTRINE WAS HER BANNER. When the Banner which the God of Israel gave to his Old Testament church was displayed, THE TRUTH was seen emblazoned on it ; even that Truth which constitutes also the banner of the New Testament church ; the banner under which the Apostles fought, as they breathed forth this prayer, 'Now thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ ; and *maketh manifest*, or displays, the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.'



The twelve Apostles are the **LEADERS** or **CHIEFS** of the New Testament church. The twelve **PRINCES** of the tribes were the leaders or chiefs of the Old Testament. Each of these princes and their tribes encamped under his own banner. **IN THE MANNER OF THEIR ENCAMPMENT, THE HIEROGLYPHICS EMBLAZONED ON THEIR BANNERS COMBINED TO FORM THE CHERUBIM; SO THAT THE CHERUBIC FIGURES, THE GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS, FORMED THE BANNER UNDER WHICH THE OLD TESTAMENT CHURCH FOUGHT THE WARS OF THE LORD.**

The following programme of the encampment of the Israelites in the Wilderness will show this:—



Here we have the four sided compact body, the

same as the cherubim are described ; with the same figures, and with the tribes on the wings of the encampment, corresponding with the outstretched wings of the cherubim. With this coincidence, which no man of a sane mind can consider accidental, we cannot now hesitate for a moment to say that the Cherubim were figurative representations of the church, in which God dwells ; in the same manner as he dwelt in the tabernacle, in the midst of the tribes of Israel. And as the church was always known by her doctrine, these cherubic figures represent not only the body, the church, 'the one new man,' 'the perfect man, or complete body,' 'the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;' but they also represent THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION, under which and for which she contends ; in allusion to which she says, 'We will rejoice in THY SALVATION, in the name of our God we will set up THE BANNERS!'

In the hieroglyphic use of the combination of figures called the Cherubim, in Eden, in the Tabernacle, and in the Temple, we see 'the Beauty of the Lord, or his truth in his sanctuary,' like himself, always the same, yesterday, today, and for ever ; and in them forming the Banner under which the Old Testament church 'wrought righteousness,' and 'subdued kingdoms,' we have a most wonderful attestation, by figure, to that truth for which, under the New Testament, as well as under the Old, they 'jeopardied their lives unto the death.'

We Gentiles 'in the outer court' have heard 'the sound of the wings of the Cherubim' 'like the noise

of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, as the voice of speech.' For the doctrine preached by the Cherubim has come into all the world, 'not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of the living God, which is able to make wise unto Salvation.' We have, indeed, the very words or speech of 'the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who filleth all in all;' in the words recorded by John in the Revelation, to be uttered by the four living creatures; when they give glory, honour, and thanks to Him who sitteth on the throne—when they sing the new song, 'thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us to our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.' And, as if always on the watch—the eyes ever awake—resting not day nor night—even when John himself continues the ascription in these words, 'Blessing, honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, to the Lamb for ever and ever,' the four living creatures instantly respond, 'AMEN!'

Thus it is to be IN the church, as well as BY the church, that 'the manifold wisdom of God' is to be seen. When he comes again, he is 'to be glorified IN his saints, and admired IN all them that believe.' The puzzling or hard question has always been, how it was possible, consistently with God's ineffable attributes of holiness and justice, that sin could be pardoned, or 'mercy rejoice over judgment.' The answer to this will, at last, be seen and 'admired IN his glorified body,' when he presents it

‘a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.’ The figure, therefore, which represented that body, and which showed *how* its purification, ‘even as if tried by fire,’ was to be accomplished, was called ‘his glory,’ ‘the sum of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.’

Considering these representations as summing up the ‘wisdom of God in a mystery,’ or figure, there seems great propriety and meaning, when the seals are about to be removed from the book of prophecy in the presence of the apostle John, that each of these living creatures should alternately invite him to ‘come and see.’

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES.

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THE expression selected for the title of this chapter occurs in the triumphal song of Deborah and Barak, on occasion of the destruction of Sisera, Jabin's general. In the loftiness of her exultation, Deborah exclaims, 'They fought from heaven! The stars in their courses fought against Sisera!' This is one of the many singular allusions to the heavenly bodies, throughout the Old Testament, some of which have been already noticed, and none of which can be explained satisfactorily, save on the principles contended for in a former chapter. Those principles may be summed up in this, that the ancient people of God were instructed to trace in the heavens the prophetic purposes of God. Every objection to this is silenced by *one fact*, were there no other to corroborate it. Balaam prophesied of 'a star to arise in Jacob;' and when the Saviour was born, 'wise men came, saying, we have seen *his* STAR in the east, and are come to worship him:' and, 'lo! the star which they had seen, went and stood over where the young child was!' Scepticism and infidelity must

overturn the authority of the word of God, ere they can eradicate this amazing attestation to the truth of God, prophesied of and fulfilled in the heavens.

We cannot now trace distinctly, neither is it necessary, how the speech of the firmament was read. We formerly stated the grounds for believing that it was by the hieroglyphical representations, implanted there at the first by the finger of God; who thereby declared that his purposes were from everlasting, 'settled as a faithful witness in heaven.' We shall now proceed to notice some other circumstances corroborative of this doctrine.

In the preceding chapter it was ascertained that the four principal standards of the Israelitish church formed the Cherubim. All the tribes, as well as these four, had standards; what they were is matter of historical record, on the part of those who could have no reasons for mistaking it. Historical tradition is of little importance, save when corroborated by Scripture; but it is, surely, to say the least of it, a most interesting circumstance, when we find Jacob on his death-bed, and Moses when about to ascend the mountain where he was to die, telling the children of Israel prophetically, what was to happen to them *in the latter days*;—telling them this, in language having several references to their standards; which standards corresponded with twelve signs arrayed in the heavens by the hand of God himself! We shall quote some of these passages without note or comment; leaving it to the reader to judge how far there is reason to trace allusions to the signs, as well as standards, in them.

‘Reuben, my first-born, unstable as water.’

‘Simeon and Levi, brethren.’

‘Judah is a lion’s whelp.’

‘Dan, a scorpion in the path.’

‘Joseph’s bow abode in strength.’

‘Joseph’s glory, the firstling of his bullock.’

If it were necessary to examine critically the ‘blessings’ from which the above are quoted, and to compare the original with the zodiac of Dendera and other ancient monuments, we should find the coincidences and references to be much more numerous and explicit. Our object, however, is not to prove what signs were actually referred to, or what the signs were, or what the interpretation, but to establish a general reference to them in the word of prophecy.

Connected with this part of our subject, it may be noticed, that the stones on the breastplate of the High Priest were arranged according to the encampment of the children of Israel; corresponding also with the precious stones forming the twelve foundations and the twelve gates of the Holy City, seen in the vision of St. John. In the midst of the precious stones on the breastplate, and corresponding with the situation of the Tabernacle and Schechinah (or shining of God’s glory) in the midst of the tribes,—the Urim and Thummim (Lights and Perfections) were placed. The following extracts from Jewish writers, relative to the standards and precious stones, are too curious to be omitted.

In Jonathan’s Targum this passage occurs: ‘The standard of Judah was of linen, of three colours,

answering to the three precious stones in the breastplate, viz. a chalcedony, sapphire, and sardonyx. In it, surrounding the Lion, the names of the three tribes, Judah, Issachar, and Zabulon, were engraved or expressed; and in the midst thereof was written, 'Rise up, Lord, let thine enemies be scattered; let them that hate thee flee before thee.' Chazkuni gives the following account of the other tribes: 'The portraiture of a Man was upon Reuben's standard, dyed after the colour of the sardine, set in the breastplate; and his name, with the sign of his mandrakes which he found, which are so called from their likeness to a man. The portraiture of a Lion was on Judah's standard, dyed in the colour of a chalcedony, agreeable to his father's prophecy concerning the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. The figure of a Bullock, or Ox, was on Ephraim's standard, dyed in his colour on the breastplate, a beryl; and this agreeable to Moses' blessing. The figure of an Eagle was dyed into the colour of a hyacinth on Dan's standard.' '*So the Ensigns,*' Aben Ezra says, '*were like the Cherubim which Ezekiel saw.*'

It cannot but be deemed a very *curious* coincidence, that the light, or schechinah, should appear in the tabernacle from between the cherubic figures; that the same light, and the pillar of fire, should have been in the midst of standards having the cherubic figures portrayed on them; that the Sun should have had his tabernacle or course in heaven through figures of the same kind; that the Lights and Perfections of the breastplate should have been in the midst of precious stones corresponding with



the twelve tribes, and having their names engraved on them; that the light of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, should be described 'as of a stone most precious, even as a jasper stone, clear as crystal'; and that the light should be in the midst, there again, of other precious stones, twelve in number, having the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb!

Let the reader connect with these circumstances the dream of Joseph, formerly noticed, in which the eleven constellations bowed down to the twelfth; and that these were interpreted to mean himself and his eleven brethren, the ensigns of whose families were as above described, and he will be constrained to own that all this coincidence cannot be *accidental*. It will suggest to him, also, a remarkable meaning in Deborah's words, 'the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.'

It is cited, in the Psalms, as one of the greatest instances of Divine power, that God 'telleteth the number of the stars, he calleth them all *by names*'; and this is immediately followed by the declaration, 'Great is our Lord, and of great power, his understanding is unsearchable.' If it were merely meant that God gave names to the heavenly bodies, there are many more inscrutable acts of his power in nature than this. But when it is told to Daniel that, at the resurrection 'they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and the multitude that are turned to righteousness, *as the stars* for ever and ever;' when an apostle says, 'there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars—for one star differeth

from another star in glory—so also is the resurrection of the dead;’ and when we see the Sun of righteousness himself, ‘holding *the seven stars* in his right hand,’—there seems to be more than a mere illustrative use,—there is evidently a symbolical allusion to them, in all such passages. The numbering, ordering, arranging, and naming the stars at first, so that they might serve for SIGNS, or be *significant* of the numbering, gathering, or enrolling of the heavenly church, is the only key to that repeated reference to them throughout the Scriptures, which is summed up in an ascription of praise to

‘Him that by Wisdom made the Heavens!’

‘For His mercy endureth for ever!’

Looking at the ordinances of heaven, as framed and set in order for a purpose so sublime, what force and meaning is given to the passages, adduced in a former chapter, respecting THE DECLARATION of the glory of God in the firmament—night unto night showing forth knowledge of his salvation;—to that reference also in the 8th psalm, ‘Jehovah our Adonai, how excellent (*adir*, the root of our word *adore*) is thy name in all the earth, who hast set (placed, ordered) thy glory in and around the heavens. As I look to thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast rightly ordered, (*arranged and settled according to a previous design in respect to something future*, see Taylor’s Hebrew Concordance,) what is man, that thou art *thus* mindful of him; the son of man, that thus thou visitest him?’

Again, take, with this key, such passages in the

prophets as the following: 'Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the *foundations of the earth*? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers: that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out *as a tabernacle of rest* to dwell in.' 'Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night.'

Turning from the prophets, which abound with such passages, to Job, who is so often instructed out of the book of the firmament; how dark to us are such lessons as the following, yet how expressive and clear must they have been to him, or to any one who understood the interpretation of the metaphors: 'Canst thou lead Mazzeroth (the twelve signs); canst thou guide Arcturus and his sons?' That there were testimonies, figures, or parables in these signs, who can doubt that reads this appeal to him? 'Who commandeth the sun and it shineth not, and by **THE TESTIMONY OF THE STARS teacheth them**: who alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea: who maketh Arcturus, Pleiades, and the chambers of the south: who doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.'

The wonderful works of God, in the heavens above as well as in the earth beneath, were employed, then, as figurative instructors by the Spirit of God, under the Old Testament. They were so

used, not only under the Mosaic economy, but that use was evidently a continuation, a following up, or application of, the symbols prepared for that purpose 'from the foundation of the earth.' It was one of the 'divers manners in which God of old spake unto the fathers,' and bore testimony to the words of his servants the prophets. It was a figurative mode of instruction, often adopted by the Spirit of God speaking by the prophets; followed by the Apostles; and sanctioned and explained by the Great Apostle and High Priest of the Christian profession, in the revelation of the Old Testament figures and hieroglyphics, which he made to his servant John; 'who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.' Had that metaphorical use of the signs of heaven been confined merely to illustrations, drawn from their beauty or number, we might have been content with the current opinion, that they were alluded to in the Scriptures because they *happened* to offer very pretty allegories and a popular mode of instruction. But unless we yield to the impious idea, that the metaphors used by the Lord himself and his servants were borrowed from the superstitions of the world, we must seek a much higher source for the introduction into the church of God of old, and into the Scriptures of truth, of such amazing figurative coincidences and references, connected with the signs of heaven, as we have found there. We have seen the hieroglyphic figures pertaining to them, introduced into the earthly sanctuary, and shining in the visions of the hea-

venly holy place. Not only are the 'four living creatures' there, but 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah' is introduced. The seven stars are beheld in the right hand of Him 'whose countenance was as the sun shining in his strength.' The same glorious person gives the promise of 'the Morning Star.' A woman appears, clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and on her head 'a crown of twelve stars.' These can be no fortuitous, no borrowed, no accidental allusions. The Wonderful Councillor who *reveals* these mysteries or figures, is He who at the first 'made great lights: the sun to rule (instruct) by day; the moon and stars to rule (instruct) by night; for his mercy endureth for ever.' Did the Maker and Former of these things so array them, so constitute, so order, and so divide them, without any regard to the use he himself was to make of them, to teach man 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven?' Nay, their adaptation to HIS TRUTHS is the proof that 'OUR GOD *made the heavens.*' 'Thus saith the Lord, who giveth the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night; who divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar: the Lord of hosts is his name: if THOSE ORDINANCES depart from me, saith the Lord, THE SEED OF ISRAEL also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever'

## CHAPTER XIX.

# THE KNOWLEDGE OF WITTY INVENTIONS.

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WE have now glanced at the most prominent lessons in the Divine Economy, taught by means of figures, implanted in and around the creation when it was first called into existence: lessons begun to Adam; continued in the patriarchal line; interwoven into the veil of the law; and constituting an important part of prophetic metaphor. Ere proceeding to enquire into the use made of the same symbols and symbolical mode of teaching, by the nations which were left to choose their own ways; there is a branch of ancient teaching, a room in the schools of the prophets, to which we would wish to pay a short visit, ere turning from that chosen people, to whom God revealed himself as he did to no other nation under heaven. The lessons to which we allude, are intimately connected with the subject we have been considering; although rather a branch from them, than constituting an integral part of the same mode of teaching.

The parables or figures we have hitherto been

considering, are those borrowed immediately from natural phenomena: the branch to which we now turn for a little, sprung out of them; and took the form of dark sayings, enigmas, riddles, or, in the words of the proverb from which the title to this chapter is quoted—witty inventions. For this kind of knowledge Solomon was greatly celebrated, for ‘he spake three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five.’

The Queen of the South came from the uttermost parts of the earth, to hear this wisdom of Solomon, and to put ‘*hard questions*’ to him. To suppose that she came to put unmeaning riddles or mysticisms to him, and that she went away, on receiving an answer to them, like a child pleased with a new toy, is really to reduce the Bible itself to a level with the profane prints, with which it is so often trammelled, and by which the ideas of youth, respecting the grandest subjects which were ever discussed amongst men, are in many cases irrecoverably debased. There were *hard questions* then *in the heart* (for the Queen of Sheba communed with Solomon of *all* that was in *her heart*); there were *riddles* then, as there are *now*, which many, overlooking the answers which THE BOOK they have in their hands gives, often, in secret, wish one would rise from the dead to expound to them! The philosopher, to whom the admiring eyes of the world are turned, while he has been tracing the operations of millions of years in the bowels of the earth, or has been dilating on the countless myriads of worlds which filled the universe, ere yet this little speck in

the universe, the earth, was created,—even *he*, when he retires to his closet and shuts his doors about him, or when he communes with his own heart on his bed, has *hard questions*, which the world never hears of, which he would be ashamed to own, but which he would go to the uttermost parts of the earth to get an answer to !

The wisdom with which Solomon was so highly favoured, and which he celebrates so much in his writings, was, ‘the wisdom which dwells with *subtilty*, and finds out the knowledge of *witty inventions*.’ The idea at the root of the word translated ‘witty inventions,’ is that of a line or cord tightly *knotted* ; while the word translated ‘prudence,’ on the margin ‘subtilty,’ is the state or condition of a person braced to an arduous undertaking—having his eyes on the alert, or, as Solomon expresses it, ‘in his head,’ and his body unincumbered.

These images depict the state and situation of a wise and prudent man at any time, but more especially under the Old Covenant, or expectant dispensation. There was then a *Gordian knot* to be untied, a *riddle* to be resolved. Until the great Zaphnath Paaneah, or Revealer of Secrets, came, every kind of knowledge had a figurative or expectant character. Sometimes it took the form of what is translated a SIGN, that is, a thing progressing or going forward to a future development : A FIGURE, a matter to be laid open : A WONDER, something out of the course of nature, for future elucidation : AN ORDINANCE, a witness to a future event : A LINE, a stretching forward in hope : A PROVERB, a figurative instructor :



A RIDDLE, a hard saying, or a dark question, the unfolding of which is to give joy. These are the ideas at the roots of all the words, used, at that period, to convey instruction. They all had a prospective aspect; all a dark present, with a future brightness or elucidation. We cannot now, from their language having been so long dead, see the force or beauty of many of their divine sentences;—so well ‘understand a proverb and the interpretation thereof, the words of the wise and their dark sayings.’ But events have come to pass, in these latter days of the earth, which, although they do not in all cases enable us to see the force of the saying itself, plainly guide us to the object of them all. For instance, although the proverbs of Solomon, which have come down to us in the book bearing that name, are all apparently, or on the surface, applicable to, or drawn from, the ordinary matters of daily life; yet, now that He, who is made unto his people ‘Wisdom,’ has come, we have in him the interpretation of all Solomon’s sayings about wisdom; and we now know why it was necessarily *hidden wisdom*, until he came. In the true and false women, spoken of by the same preacher, we find prototypes of the true and false churches, described in the New Testament. In his forcible picture of inebriety and its effects, (Prov. xxiii. 29) we observe a faithful delineation of the effects of mixing *doctrines*, as well as wines; of the unsteadiness of mind and conduct which follows, ‘heaping to ourselves teachers, having itching ears, and turning away from the *unmixed* milk of the word.’ In these, and many other instances, we may

not be able to estimate the extreme beauty with which the original saying must have been clothed, when it came from the lips of the wise man; but the fulfilment of the anticipated hidden matters, which lay behind the veil of the proverb, 'like apples of gold within a network of silver,' gives us the scope, and spirit, and design of them. We now understand why it was 'the glory of God to conceal a thing (to veil it in figures), but the honour of kings to search out a matter.'

We cannot imagine, however, that the spirit or design of the divine sentences of old was wholly unintelligible to the hearers. 'The holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, searched what and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, *did signify*, when it testified' the things concerning him and his kingdom. The queen of Sheba travelled to very little purpose, if she did not *understand* the prophetic nature of all that filled her with so much admiration at the court of Solomon; and her journey was a most unprofitable one, if she only carried back a few unintelligible sayings, or a few dry moral sentences.

The superiority of our position, who have been honoured to hear of the Greater than Solomon, was, in a great degree, made up to the expectants of the Old Testament, by the construction of the language, and its intimate connexion with the prophetic signs respecting the coming and the kingdom of the Messiah. Unless we take this into consideration, their acts will appear as absurd as their language

unmeaning. How puerile, nay, how unjust and and foolish, the *riddle* which Samson put to his friends, at his marriage-feast, if it meant nothing more than that he had slain a lion and eaten honey out of the carcase! If it merely respected *that*, it is only paralleled by one child asking another to guess what had happened to him on a certain day, and dignifying the puerility by the name of a riddle. The Spirit of God would never have been given to Samson to enact, nor employed in recording, such foolery. Samson 'put forth' a sentence, to them, containing a great truth, under two most striking figures;—that truth, which was the subject of all the Old Testament mysteries or figures: 'Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.' The subject, and the language in which it was couched, would have been at once understood by his companions, had there been any 'wise-hearted' among the thirty young men—any accustomed to look from the sign to the thing signified; even although they had heard nothing about the lion or the honey. Now that the thing hath come to pass, we can see an evident allusion in Samson's riddle beyond its application to the occurrence which suggested it to him; so might those who heard it, if they had instituted a proper investigation into the language and figures in which it was clothed.

We have briefly glanced at the nature of these 'dark sayings' of the Old Testament, on account of their connexion with the figures interwoven with

the language. Interesting as it would be to analyse these sayings, and to obtain glimpses of the prophetic instruction conveyed in them, the necessity of the study is superseded by the appearance of the true Light of which they all testified. It is, however, not merely a matter of interest but of importance, to notice the source from whence they were drawn, and the object to which they all point; for it gives consistency, force, and beauty to the instruction conveyed by them, and accounts for the high estimation in which they were held by those who 'blessed God for having placed so wise a Son on the throne of his father David.'

The mode of instruction by means of parables was, like every part of the Divine Economy, darkened and disfigured ere our Lord appeared, by the teachers in the Jewish church. They took away the key of knowledge, entering not in themselves, nor suffering others to enter. The services of the law, which prefigured the atonement, were transformed into an unmeaning ritual: the statutes of the Lord, which preached the Divine Righteousness, were divested of their spiritual meaning, and made a ground of self-righteousness; and the mysteries, figures, and parables of the Old Testament, were stripped of all their beauty, and made the groundwork of the most pitiful compilation of mysticisms and puerilities, which ever disgraced a civilized people.

Leaving the land of Judea, the scene of so many wonderful works—of so many preachings to a dis-

obedient and a gainsaying people; let us now turn to the Gentile nations, and enquire what use *they* made of the knowledge of God, delivered to them when 'they received the portion of goods which fell to their share, and took their journeys into far countries.'

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE WAY OF THE HEATHEN.

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‘WHEN the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord’s portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.’

In this declaration it is distinctly intimated that, when God scattered the Babel confederacy, and sent the various tribes to seek out and to possess their different inheritances, they were all under the eye of the Governor among the nations. However accidental, to themselves or to others, the choice they made of countries might appear, Heaven was directing all their movements; with a special relation to the part each might be called upon, in the providence of God, to take for or against his chosen people; or to the share which might afterwards be allotted to them, in promulgating the report of what was to be transacted in ‘Jacob, the lot of the Lord’s inheritance.’ All had a reference to the fulfilment

of the one great and glorious matter, for which creation was called into existence.

Until that great event was brought to pass, at which all heaven shall for ever wonder, God left the nations to choose their own ways; that is, he made no new revelations to them as he did to his own portion. Yet 'he left himself not without witness,' even amongst these nations. 'He did good, sending rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.' In these daily acts of beneficence he maintained his character, in the sight of all nations, as the God who keepeth covenant and mercy for ever; for in these things he fulfilled to all nations the covenant made with their progenitor, Noah; 'summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, did not cease.'

But his creatures became 'unthankful, vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.' They were sent abroad with the knowledge of God and of his ways. These ways of his continued the same; 'he caused his sun to shine, and his rain to come down, on the just and on the unjust.' But they 'did not like to acknowledge the God' who had been revealed to them, and whose glory had been declared to them. 'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and *changed* the glory of the uncorruptible God' into that which is no glory.

Some of the ways in which the glory of God was revealed to man from the first, were briefly enquired into in the earlier chapters of this work. Amongst those ways, we found one, in particular, which

seemed well fitted for the situation and state of the world after the dispersion of Babel. Of that way, even the finger and hand-writing of the Almighty in the firmament, it is said: 'There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard; their words have gone out to all the earth, and their report to the ends of the world.'

In reference to *that way*, and its adaptation to the office of a public instructor to the nations, there is a most remarkable allusion in Deut. iv. 19. Moses is there warning the Israelites against idolatry of every kind; and, after telling them 'to take good heed to make no graven image,' he says, 'and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them and serve them, *which the Lord thy God hath divided, (marg. IMPARTED) unto all nations under all heaven.*'

With THIS BOOK *imparted* to them, all nations were suffered for a time to choose their own ways. That book, in which the visible things of God clearly declared the invisible, was accompanied, to them, with a very wonderful key, that of a language illustrative of the works of God; 'so that they were without excuse.' That same key opened up to them the meaning of all the surprising natural phenomena of the earth, as well as of the heavens, which so distinctly declared 'the ETERNAL power and GODHEAD' of their Creator.

How they corrupted that knowledge, and 'changed the truth of God into a lie,' is the subject of the following chapters.



## CHAPTER XXI.

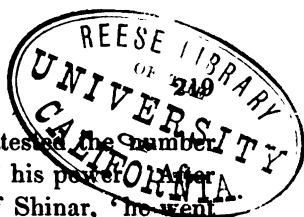
### NIMROD.

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ALTHOUGH we purpose dividing the subject before us into the several names of religions which sprung out of the Babel union, rather than into notices of the different kingdoms and the creed professed by each; yet, the brief reference in the Bible to the first potentate of Babylon is so curious, and the kingdom which begun with him occupies so large a space in the prophetic writings, that it seems advisable to devote a few pages to the consideration of the origin and nature of that great Old Testament Antichristian power.

It is narrated of Nimrod, in the third generation from Noah, that 'he began to be mighty in the earth;' and as 'the beginning of his kingdom,' that is, the head or metropolis of his kingdom, 'was Babel,' we conclude that he headed the remains of the coalition there; after the sects and parties had been broken off, and had taken their departure to other lands.

The coalition formed by Nimrod extended far,



and many great cities rapidly attested the number of his subjects, and the extent of his power. After founding four cities in the land of Shinar, 'he went forth into Assyria,' and built four there also. When all these cities are enumerated, there is a curious note, appended in the text, which seems in our translation to apply only to Resen, but which we apprehend refers to the whole Babylonish power. 'The same,' it is said, 'is a great city.' Now less is heard afterwards of Resen than of the others. The note is literally 'THIS, THE CITY, THE GREAT.' Comparing that note with what is said of Spiritual Babylon, Rev. xvii. 18, 'the woman which thou sawest is THAT GREAT CITY, which reigneth over the kings of the earth,' it may be considered whether the note in Genesis is not applicable to *the whole* Babylonish dominion; and thus early points it out as the great ancient worldly power, which was to stand in contrast with the smallness and comparative weakness of 'Jacob, the Lord's portion.'

The first monarch of this great empire is said to have been 'a mighty *hunter* before the Lord.' This is one of the instances in which the translators have chosen the secondary and derivative meaning of a word, instead of its primary signification; one of those unfortunate phrases, which have contributed so much to instil contemptible ideas respecting the early events recorded in the Bible. It might have been expected, that, if the unlikelihood had not occurred to them, of the sacred historian recording that the monarch of an empire so magnificent was so great a hunter that his hunting became *a proverb*;

the phrase, '*before the Lord*,' would have set the translators right.

The original intention of the Babel conspiracy was uniformity, *before the Lord*, or in religious matters. Nimrod seems to have entered into the scheme with great zeal: and 'verily he had his reward.' He was 'a mighty **CONSTRAINER**, *before the Lord*,' or in the cause of the Lord; and he acquired great fame by it; his efforts were very notable, for it continued a proverb for many ages afterwards, 'Even as Nimrod **THE GREAT INTOLERANT** *before the Lord*.'

Thus early did that Great Intolerance begin to rear its head, which became, in process of time, 'the hammer of the whole earth:' thus early did that *hunting* commence, of which it was afterwards said, 'will ye hunt the souls of my people?' 'they hunt every man his brother with a net.'

We shall not properly estimate the nature of this bigotry and zeal, and the jealousy with which it always looked at 'the inheritance of the Lord,' without keeping in view the religious origin of the Babylonish kingdom; and the public nature of the call of Abraham, and of the promises given to him and his seed.

'That great city Babylon' and its dependencies had their origin, while all the earth was at one on religious matters. There was no doubt, therefore, its institutions were founded in truth, and that its doctrines were similar to those professed by the immediate progenitors of Abraham. The scheme, although, as formerly noticed, only a section of the

great one, was still magnificent in its conception, and imposing, by the worldly power and grandeur which accompanied it. Founded on such principles, possessed of such power, it assumed the tone of the kingdom of heaven in this world. It not only 'sat as a queen,' but 'it lifted itself up to heaven.' Babylon became 'the praise of the whole earth;' and it was said of her and her antitype, 'what city is like unto this great city?'—her 'head' or origin in heaven, her institutions heavenly, her very intolerance a passport to the kingdom of heaven!

It is observable how strictly Babel maintained the character of her founder for intolerance, even to the very last. Even when Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the God of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego—the acknowledgment cannot be made without A BULL; the confession of the truth cannot be made without a decree; 'therefore, I, Nebuchadnezzar, make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dung-hill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.'

A profession of religion, which spoke thus 'so exceeding arrogantly,' even when it spoke true, could not but look with great jealousy and hatred at a comparative handful of worshippers, of the race of Abraham, laying claim to the title of the Church and nation of God,—'a chosen nation, a peculiar people.' The part the world would take, in the question at issue between them, may be easily

guessed. Accordingly, we find every nation, as well as Assyria, ready to seize on any pretext for harassing and vexing the despised people in the land of Judea.

We see, also, in the different fortunes of the two antagonist parties, how greatly the faith of the smaller was tried. Worldly prosperity attended Babylon ; ‘ she was a golden cup in the Lord’s hand ; ’ Israel, excepting at one or two typical periods, was generally ‘ a poor and an afflicted people,’ ‘ though the Lord her God was with her, and the shout of a king was heard in the midst of her.’ In this lay one of the strongest temptations of the enemy, in the many and too successful attempts to seduce her ‘ to commit fornication, and to eat things offered to idols.’ She gained the esteem of the world when she did so, and would be warmly approved for her ‘ liberality,’—greatly praised for laying aside a bigoted adherence to one particular form of worship ; as if any form, gone about with a devout heart, would not be equally acceptable to God !

To estimate fairly the temptations held out to the Israelites to ‘ learn the ways of the nations,’ and to ‘ forsake the Lord God of their fathers ; ’—to account for their excessive proneness to borrow ‘ the patterns of altars,’ and the forms of religious worship observed by those around them ;—we must never lose sight of this circumstance,—that there was *a similarity* between their own worship and that to which they were so often seduced. It was *this similarity* which gave Babel all its power over

the conscience. The *great principles* were recognised at Babel;—and even there, at a very late period of her history, there were *acknowledgments* made by her monarchs, which cannot be accounted for on any grounds, but that the knowledge of the God and Saviour was never altogether lost, even in Babylon. It was perverted, and the affairs of religion applied to objects of worldly ambition; but Babel would have lost all her power had she openly professed infidelity.

It is interesting to trace the confessions of the truth, and of the true God, made in the land of Chaldea, from the time of Abraham downwards. It has already been noticed, that Abraham did not leave his native land on account of its idolatry. When he sent there for a wife for Isaac, Laban calls the messenger ‘blessed of *Jehovah*.’ Laban and Bethuel both said, ‘the thing proceedeth from *Jehovah* ;’ and when they blessed Rebekah, they did so in language having a direct reference to the promise; ‘be thou mother of thousands of millions, and let THY SEED possess the gate of those who hate them.’ When Jacob, too, goes to the same country, and marries two wives, although one of them steals her father’s *Elohim* or Gods, yet both of them are frequently found confessing *Jehovah* ; and Laban, who had a vision in a dream, says to Jacob, that ‘the *Elohim* of his father Isaac had appeared to him.’

Balaam, who was sent for by Balak, king of Moab, came out of the mountains of Armenia. He is called *a prophet* by the apostles. He consulted

with Jehovah; Jehovah spake to him; and in the grandest prophetic language on record, he foretold the coming of the Messiah, and the nature of his kingdom. 'He loved,' indeed, 'the wages of unrighteousness;' but the same charge was brought against many prophets in the New Testament church, even in the days of the apostles. It is singular, too, that the number of Balaam's altars and sacrifices should have so coincided with the acknowledged sacred numbers in the Scriptures.

In later periods, we have the decrees of Darius and Cyrus; and we find Rabshakeh, the captain of Senacherib, declaring to the Jews, in the name of his master, 'Jehovah said to me, go up against this land to destroy it.' But, above all, what does Nebuchadnezzar, the setter-up of the great golden image, say, when he sees Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego walking in the midst of the fiery furnace, unhurt? 'Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt: and the form of the fourth is like THE SON OF GOD.'

This celebrated saying of the king of Babylon, and the circumstances which produced it, lead to the consideration of one part of the creed of the East, which, from a circumstance we are now about to notice, may be appropriately brought forward, under the title of this chapter.

The word translated 'mighty,' and applied thrice to Nimrod, in the short notice we have of him in

Genesis, is, in the original, *Geber*. Now, it is rather a curious circumstance that the sect of *Fireworshippers*, which, in Persia and other eastern countries, lay the strongest claim to antiquity and purity of worship, are to this day called *Gebers*. They are said to be 'rigorous in their morals and honest in their dealings. They profess to believe a resurrection and a future judgment, and to worship only one God. And though they perform their worship before fire, and direct their devotion towards the rising sun, yet they strenuously maintain *that they worship neither*, but that these are the most expressive *symbols* of the Deity.'

Whether their sentiments are herein truly stated, or whether they are entitled to the antiquity they claim for them, it is certainly curious, as already noticed, to find a sect professing tenets at all similar to those now quoted, in that part of the world where a *Geber* appeared so early,—in that part of the world, which all history states to have been the birth-place and cradle of what is designated Fire-worship. That worship, as will be afterwards noticed, assumed various forms, but in the tenets of the *Gebers* we certainly may trace it in the purest form; in that form which it is reasonable to suppose it would assume, ere corruption changed *symbols* into realities, and hieroglyphical truths into gods or images.

It is interesting, too, to observe, in this statement of the sentiments of the *Gebers*, so striking coincidence between these tenets and the symbolical use of Fire as illustrative of heavenly truth, noticed in the 16th chapter of this work, as approved of and



countenanced by the Spirit of God. The same ideas pervade both.

In the symbolical use of Fire, as the great purifier; as the concentration of truth; and as emblematical of the power and operation of truth, in the opposing principles of light and darkness, and the triumph of the light and fire over its opponent; as illustrative of the opposing principles of good and evil, of the truth and the lie;—we see a much more reasonable origin for the extensive idolatry that sprung out of it, than in the supposition that mankind bethought themselves, all at once, of falling down on their knees to fire, or to the sun, as a god. When, too, we find a king, in the country where these symbols were extensively used, acknowledging and recognising ‘the form of the fourth’ in the fire to be the likeness of God manifest in the flesh; and remember that the four living creatures ‘*alive in the fire*’ had been an emblem in use from the earliest ages to preach the truth of God; we meet with something in this ‘must give us pause,’ ere we can say that, even in the fire-worship of Babylon, the truth had altogether been lost sight of, however much it may have been corrupted.

There is something, also, very interesting in the earliest traditions of the fire-worshippers of the East; if, in recording them, we *translate* the figures or persons which are introduced, according to the language used at the time the kingdom of Nimrod was first set up.

At the head of these traditions stands that of Oan, or Oannes (evidently a corruption of Noah), a being

half man, half fish, who taught their ancestors *out of the sea*, and gave them knowledge so complete, *'that nothing has since been added to it.'* Among other things which this Oan taught them, was, that in the beginning there was nothing but darkness and an abyss of waters. Men appeared with *two wings*; some with two and some with *four* faces. They had *one* body, but two or *four* heads, and had the horns and hoofs of animals. A singular and curious corruption of the traditions regarding the cherubim at Eden, told to them by those who escaped the deluge.

Then we have an account of Caherman (the resemblance in the fire), of the Peri (beautiful and excellent), and the opposing spirits Dives (outcasts), 'the sons of God and the Daughters of Cain; of Tahmuraz (the perfect change from dark to light), attacking the Dive Demrush (the Power of the grave), in his own cave, and freeing the Peri Merjan (the afflicted dove).

We are then introduced to Mihr (the great light), standing between Oramaz and Ariman (the one the concealer of and the other the sender forth of the light). These three figures are represented together on many of the Persian sculptures still extant. The figure on the right of Mihr, or Mithras, holds the torch inverted, the type of death; the figure on the left holds it aloft, the type of life; while Mithras himself (the wounder or bruiser of the head), is in the act of slaying the ox; and representations of the sun, moon, and stars are sculptured around.

Some of the particulars that have transpired, respecting the initiation of worshippers of Mithras, are also curious. They were clothed in armour, and had to contend with men dressed in various habiliments and in various forms. They had to pass through the fire—they were baptized—they received a mark—an offering of bread and of water was made, accompanied by prayer; and an emblem of the resurrection was shown, but of what kind is not narrated. The ceremony finished with a crown being presented to them on the point of a sword. They were henceforth called *Lions* of Mithras, the lion being with them one of the hieroglyphics of fire or light.

We shall be better prepared to consider the nature of some of these ceremonies, after enquiring into that part of the Chaldean philosophy, or mythology, which forms the subject of the next chapter.

Before concluding the present reference to the kingdom founded by Nimrod, (in the consideration of which it was not necessary to allude to the various changes and divisions it afterwards underwent, but to consider it as the notable Asiatic power in the ancient world, which, though sometimes divided and assuming various names, at other times extended from Ethiopia to India,) there are some matters, besides those already glanced at, which deserve notice here.

In the enquiry we instituted into the subject of language, the reasons for believing letters to have been coeval with language itself were briefly stated.

Now it is observable, that in Chaldea, where the affairs of religion were more protected by public

institutions, and more systematically arranged, than any where else, *the square form* of letters was maintained, until at least the time of the carrying of the Israelites into captivity there. The antiquity of the Babylonish religious institutions, and the safeguards under which they were placed, renders it very improbable that any material change could have taken place there on the sacred characters; and the circumstance of these very characters being used by the Jews, after their return, (although they were only seventy years in Babylon, and under a state of oppression, not at all likely to have afforded them opportunities of learning them for the first time), leaves very little room to doubt that the square form was that in use in the days of Abraham, who went from Chaldea; and that it was in that form of letter the sacred books of the Jews, as well as the Chaldeans, were originally written. This seems greatly confirmed by the Chaldaic language, at the time of the Captivity, being little else than a dialect of the Hebrew.

It is interesting to observe, also, that the farther back the Hindoo and other Eastern languages are traced, the nearer they approach in form to the square or Chaldaic character; and recent extensions of the British power and dominion in the East, have led to the discovery of sacred records, in the adyta of some temples, so ancient, that the key to them is lost. These writings have a most striking resemblance, in the form of the characters, to that in which the most ancient manuscripts of the books of Moses, now extant, were written.

These circumstances offer a very strong presumption, that the original sacred character, throughout the world, came from one source; and was of that *firm* square form, above referred to, which gradually became more rounded and flowing, as it was applied to secular purposes.

This, likewise, tends to confirm the views already before the reader, on the subject of language; and renders it at least very improbable that mankind — could, all at once, or within a very short period, entirely lose view of the first principles inculcated by the primeval language. It accounts, likewise, for the very same ideas, modes of thinking, images, and hieroglyphical figures being found in almost every nation. They lay in the language itself, connected with the natural objects familiar to, and within view of, the worshippers, wheresoever they emigrated.

On these principles, the similarity of the ideas concerning KINGLY POWER, and the emblems with which it was every where invested, can alone be accounted for. The crown, the horn, the sceptre, the laurel, the branch, were not only the insignia of sovereignty among all people, and hieroglyphs having the same meaning in every nation, — but, in every kingdom, the persons of sovereigns were anointed and were held sacred, as well as in Judea; and in every nation there was the expectation of a king to arise, ‘whose kingdom,’ in the words of Darius, ‘shall not be destroyed, and his dominion unto the end.’ Thus the arising of the kingdom of

the Messiah was preached at every court, in the figurative and *prospective* emblems which surrounded it, and which decorated the persons of the kings ; and thus a king to reign in righteousness was 'the desire of all nations.'

## CHAPTER XXII.

### ASTROLOGY.

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IN a former chapter, the reasons were stated for believing that the historical notices, respecting the astronomical purposes to which 'the top' of the tower of Babel, or temple of Belus was applied, are corrupted traditions of the religious forms and services established there. These traditions receive corroboration, from the pre-eminence which fire-worship has always maintained in that part of the world—a worship intimately connected with the observation of the heavenly bodies.

In other parts of this work we have, also, produced some of those remarkable allusions to the prophetic and illustrative nature of the signs of heaven, which plainly indicate that the early worshippers were *authorised* to look at them as preachers of the Divine purposes in store for man, as well as proofs of the Divine power. To the passages then adduced, which were merely a few out of many, we may here just add one: 'Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, who hath created *these*; that bringeth out their host *by number*; he calleth them all

*by names* ; by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power, not one faileth (literally, not one man is separate from the gathering or flock to which he belongs). Why then sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?'

In such passages, there are so many singular references to the naming, as well as the classifying, arranging, or numbering of the hosts of heaven, that, taken in connexion with the power and meaning which *names* possessed in 'the one language,' can leave no room for us to doubt that 'the invisible things of God from the creation of the world,' were in no part of the creation more distinctly preached, to the early worshippers, than in the firmament. That this preaching was of a prospective or prophetic nature, as well as a daily testimony to the power and attributes of God, is just as plainly declared in other quotations formerly made.

We have more than once observed, that it is not at all necessary to the scope of our argument, to ascertain either the very nature of the instruction and prophecy given, or the very mode of its inculcation. It is quite sufficient that the existence of a doctrinal purpose in, and a prophetic use of, the firmament, be proved. That purpose and that use may have been much *more* extensive, much more expressive, much more wonderful than it is now possible for us to understand ; or it may have been much *less* so than



the passages we have quoted may lead us to think. It is of no importance, in the present stage of our enquiry, which of these suppositions is the true one. In an investigation into the origin and nature of the Chaldæan and all other systems of Astrology, it is enough that we ascertain at the outset, as we have ascertained, that, from the beginning, the heavens were looked to as declaring the glory of God, and the firmament as showing forth his handiwork; and were considered to have in this respect an illustrative power, similar to 'the voice of speech.'

When a temple then was reared, and a priesthood appointed, to establish and perpetuate a religion, which, even in its more degenerate and idolatrous days, addressed itself authoritatively to all 'people, nations, and languages,'—a mode of illustration so universal in its speech, as the figures of the firmament, could not be omitted. The introduction of the signs of heaven into that worship was founded on the known and acknowledged fact, that by these signs the God of heaven had instructed his followers at the east of Eden. Even had they wanted this sanction, they spoke a language which found a response in every mind and in every bosom. The language the world possessed gave them a key to the signs, which rendered the figures, in public estimation, fit and appropriate ornaments of a heavenly temple; useful and expressive illustrations of the great truths, to which the recent deluge had borne testimony, in a sermon which could not soon be forgotten.

It was this which gave Babel all its authority, all

its power over the consciences of men. Without some of the principles professed there, and figures first set up being intelligible to the mass of mankind, it is not possible that the influence of Babylon, in religious matters, could have been so great or so general ; or that the true worshippers could have been so easily seduced, at all times, either to her religious profession, or to others similar to it. But a system, the first principles of which were universally acknowledged to be good ; the figures to illustrate it apt ; the arguments for its support specious ; the worldly prosperity of it great ; the temptations to join in it manifold ;—in such a system we see an origin for the priestly power of Babel, which does not call upon us to believe that mankind had then fewer reasoning powers, and fewer opportunities for cultivating and exercising them, than in, what we are modestly pleased to call, more enlightened times.

The Babel priesthood and worshippers appealed to the heavens, as shewing forth the glory of God, and the firmament his handiwork, in its hieroglyphic preaching ; by which day uttered speech to day, and night to night shewed forth *wisdom*. They pointed to these heavens, as illustrative of the invisible works of Him who is, and was, and is to come. They could advocate on scriptural, or patriarchal grounds, that those illustrated what he *had* done, the promise he had made ; what he *was* doing, in his spiritual influences among men, just as the heat of his emblem, the sun, penetrated all nature ; and what he *was to do*, when the Great

Mihr was to come, and when the light of *the figures*, during the night, was no longer to be required.

Who so likely to know the will of God, and his future purposes, as those who night and day ministered in a temple dedicated to *this* service—as those who consulted the Urim (Uriman, Ahriman) and the Thummim (Thammuz) in such a temple? Can we wonder at the power they began rapidly to possess and abuse over the minds of men? Can we be surprised that Babylon lifted herself up to heaven, set her head among the stars, and became the proudest of all the proud enemies of the separated people? Above all, can we wonder, that a power so formidable was soon perverted to the basest purposes; and that while God was, in his own good way, by his doings among his people, giving line upon line, precept upon precept, to keep alive the true meaning of all the wisdom contained in his visible works,—Babylon should have been sinking into that abyss of superstition, astrology, and polytheism, which brought down upon her the righteous judgment of Him, who will not give his glory to another, nor his praises to graven images!

But let it never be lost sight of, that Babylon, with her worship, could not have continued to keep the hold she did, and to be so seductive, if she had blotted out every trace of the principles she once professed. She still ‘hewed out her pillars,’ like wisdom; she still ‘slew her offerings;’ she still ‘mingled her wine.’ Still she said, ‘I have peace offerings with me, this day I have paid my vows;’

‘therefore,’ she added to those she entrapped,—  
‘therefore, came I forth to meet thee: I have  
decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with  
carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have  
perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.’  
Thus it was so necessary for the wise man to say,  
although he himself neglected his own admonition;  
‘let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not  
astray in her paths, for she hath cast down many  
wounded; yea, many strong have been slain by  
her.’ ‘At the fall of Babylon, shall fall the slain of  
all the earth.’

If these paths were enticing to the ‘simple’ at  
first, from the simplicity of doctrine and practice to  
which the purest fire-worshippers have always laid  
claim,—they became still more so, when the hiero-  
glyphics and prophetic symbols were gradually  
turned from their primitive application, to purposes  
of the most superstitious kind, but of the deepest  
interest to individuals. The priests, once looked up  
to as the true interpreters of the symbolical and  
prophetic heavens, were amply prepared with means  
to work on the religious and superstitious hopes  
and fears of the people.

The nature of their studies gave them a minute  
acquaintance with the motions, as well as the clas-  
sification, of the celestial lights. They could thus  
foretel, precisely, the moment when any of their  
heavenly monitors would be obscured or enlight-  
ened. The extent to which such an engine might  
be used, for working on the minds of the more  
ignorant among the people at first, and over all

classes to some degree, may easily be imagined. The general prophetic nature of the heavens, in allusion to the kingdom of the Messiah, was first generally taken for granted and proceeded upon. The tendency of human nature being to corrupt truth by altering it, adding to it, or mystifying it;—so when the ultimate and great scope of heavenly truth was, from any or all of these causes, lost sight of, other applications were made of the celestial phenomena; all of them still in a *prophetic* spirit; all of them in apparent consonance with the great principles they set out with.

The prognostications of eclipses and other natural phenomena would, thus, soon become a part of the *prophetic* intelligence, derived from intercourse with *heaven*. And we may suppose the reverence and the awe with which those men would be looked up to, whom they were taught to consider priests of God,—so near to the Deity, so intimately acquainted with his will, when they heard their prophecy of the obscuration of the brightest emblem of the Deity; and when they saw that emblematical representation of his favour withdrawn from them, at the very moment his messengers had predicted.

By these and other perversions of their functions, as ministers in the temple of Belus, an amazing political power and influence would be given them; and the fame of Babylon, of her diviners and her astrologers, went out into all nations. How expressive, then, are the words of the prophet to that Babylon, which had appeared, through her intimacy with *the heavens*, to foretel, as well as to accomplish,

the greatest doings among the nations,—how cutting his sarcasm in allusion to her fall, to which Babylon herself was so blind: ‘Let now the viewers of the heavens, the seers or foretellers by the constellations, the prognosticators of new events, stand up and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee!’

It cannot fail to attract our attention,—while noticing the assumption of prophetic political knowledge, by the astrologers of Babylon, through their intercourse with the stars,—that most of the *true* prophecies, regarding the antichristian kingdoms, were given by hieroglyphical figures of animals and of men; and it was certainly a very wonderful judgment on the *gods* of Chaldea, that hieroglyphical figures should have been revealed, in dreams and visions, to their kings, to which the professed students of the hieroglyphical language of the firmament could give no key. Still more clearly did this judgment on her gods appear, while their wise men were turned backward and their diviners mad, when one of the despised *separatists* interpreted the hieroglyphics; and had other figures revealed to himself, foreshowing, amongst other things, the total destruction of the antichristian power, ancient as well as modern.

But the intercourse which the Magi had with the heavens, was too gainful a matter to be applied only to political purposes. If the fates of kingdoms were foretold, the fortunes of the individuals composing those kingdoms, particularly the illustrious among them, might be enquired into. It was easy to invent

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a mode of connecting the fates of individuals with certain stars; nay, it is easy to see how men receiving, in a perverted state, such a study as we have been tracing to its origin, might have themselves believed in the diabolical nonsense to which they perverted the works of the finger of the Almighty. If constellations, or figures like them, were hieroglyphical of nations, might not the stars of which they were composed, have some reference to, some influence on the fate of the illustri of those kingdoms? If the stars were generally prophetic, must they not be individually so? Hence the *apothēsis*; hence the translation to the stars of those who had been eminent for their piety on earth. The connexion between the heavens and the earth was thus gradually drawn closer and closer; the influences of the stars became more and more believed in; until, to have disbelieved that the ultimate destiny of every Babylonish saint was a star, and the guardianship of his footsteps on earth the employment of the stars, would have constituted a *heretic*, and would have been construed into a denial that there was a God in heaven above.

Thus Astrology, or the foretelling of the fortunes of individuals by the stars, like all other superstitions, whether heathen or christian, arose out of a perversion of truth—out of a ‘private intepretation’ of a public or general prophecy. That there was a prophetic voice in the firmament, regarding ‘the great salvation,’ we have found reason to believe, from many passages and circumstances, which can no otherwise be accounted for: and we behold the

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expectation of the Magi, in this respect, confirmed, when they came from Chaldea, saying, 'Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him.' Without some undeniable and well-established prophetic character in the heavens, it was impossible that a superstition so widely spread, could have *every where*, as well as in Chaldea, have taken so deep root. But such a matter as this, committed into the hands of a skilful and designing race of men, to whom the consultation of the stars was deputed by the general voice, laid the foundation of, and gradually increased into, the most powerful and the most fascinating of all superstitions.

We have already stated some grounds for believing that, even while Babylon and her neighbours did thus, and in many other ways, corrupt the truths of God, she still, to the last, professed the worship of the Lord; and did not consider her hieroglyphical forms at all incompatible with that worship, even as it was observed among the Israelites. Accordingly, when the King of Assyria sent from Babylon, and other places in his dominions, settlers into the devastated provinces of Israel; when they came there, they professed to 'fear the Lord,' while they 'served their own gods.' 'Every people made their own gods, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made.' 'And the men of Babylon made Succoth Benoth (tabernacles for representations or hieroglyphics); and the men of Cuth made Nergal (the bright or shining sphere or circle, the Gilgal of the



Cherubim); and the men of Hamath made Ashima (the consecration of fire); and the Avites made Nibhaz (the vision of the budding forth); and Tartak (the setting up of the ox). And the Sepharvites made their children pass through the fire to Adramelech (the king of glory) and Annamelech (the king of power), the gods of Sepharvaim.' All these things were, doubtless, considered great improvements on the ancient primitive worship; and they were very anxious to call the mixture, the fear of the Lord. But the Spirit of God says otherwise. These were additions of man's making—not appointed by Him who said to Moses, 'See thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.' So it is recorded of the Samaritans, 'unto this day they do after the former manners;' they profess to fear, but 'they fear *not* the Lord.' These additions rendered their worship no longer the fear of the Lord, but the way of error.

The other corruptions into which Babylon degenerated, will be more appropriately noticed in some of the following chapters.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### B A A L.

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**FIRE-WORSHIP**,—or the use of the symbols of fire and light, and their hieroglyphics, to represent certain ideas or doctrines,—entered largely, as we have already seen, into the theological system which ‘the one people with the one lip’ professed. We may, therefore, expect to find it at the root of every ancient form of worship. We have already traced some of the authorised and corrected uses of the pure emblems among the Hebrews. We have seen a branch of it descend into the east; where some of its professors, at this day, are said to hold it in great simplicity, and farther removed from idolatry than, perhaps, any other sect amongst the Heathen. Another branch of it, we have ascertained, took the form of astrology, and, by a corruption and private interpretation of the hieroglyphics of the heavens, attempted to bring down the influences of the stars, on the destinies of nations and the fortunes of individuals.

But, although in different nations there was a tendency to, or partiality for, certain branches of

the system, in preference to others,—some primitive ideas and figures were common to them all; whatever nation it appeared in, whatever name the religion assumed, whether it took the name of Mithras, of Nergal, or of Baal or Bel, it was still the same, or a sprout of the same, with what the worshippers thought, of course, more expressive of appropriate symbols.

There is one circumstance which, above others, must excite our attention in respect to it, and that is,—that on the plains of Chaldea, Egypt, and other level districts, artificial high places should have been reared, to supply the places of those eminences which more hilly countries offered, for the due observance of the rites of Baal or Bel, (the Lord of the ascendant, or Enquiry for the ascension.) This circumstance, taken in connexion with *the name*, indicates what is corroborated by history and tradition, that the great symbol, looked at, or worshipped, in the services of Baal, was the sun; and that the high places were intended to catch the first rays of the God, or to offer the earliest opportunities of celebrating his ascension in the morning.

When we remember the many beautiful allusions to this *sign* amongst the people of God, (to some of which we referred in their place,) we may understand how such a worship may have been *seductive to them*. The idea of going early to celebrate the appearance of the harbinger of the morning, or of the Great Light itself, would offer a very plausible excuse for ‘going up by steps to the altar of God,’ in contravention of the law. It is remarkable, too,

that even some of those kings who purified the Church and Temple of old, often allowed the *high places* to remain. These high places seem, from this, to have held a very strong grasp of the affections of the people generally; if even those kings, ~~who~~ otherwise 'did right in the eyes of the Lord,' were not themselves weak on so plausible a matter as this.

It may here be noticed, that the great danger in referring to symbols, or appointing worship for them, otherwise than God ordained, was the tendency to raise the sign itself to a higher place than God intended for it; so by degrees to constitute *it* the Deity (or in other words to introduce MATERIALISM), ascribing to second causes powers and effects dependent on the Great I AM. But although this was one danger to be apprehended in such worship, we have no reason whatever to think, with some authors, that it *always* produced this effect; or that the worship of Baal was neither more nor less than ascribing formatory or plasmatorial powers to the irradiations of the material heavens. That there were materialists amongst the followers of Baal, there can be no doubt; but had such principles been those openly avowed as constituting it, it could never have been so seductive to the worshippers of the true God. The church of Israel never could have gone, back and forward, from materialism to Jehovah, and from Jehovah to materialism, in the way we read of their turning from idolatry or relapsing into it. Seduction always wears the front of truth. The dangers of Baalim seem to have

been these: it had propitiation in its sacrifices, and the emblem of the light of the Gospel in its doctrines; while it gendered to materialism and idolatry, through the will-worship paid to the symbols by which it was at first taught.

It is interesting to us Gentiles, 'far off in the isles of the sea,' to observe, that in Britain the worship of Baal retained, for the longest period, something of its primitive simplicity; that it was, in these islands, less encumbered with the numerous idols and images which crept into it in eastern countries. In other respects, the features of the western and eastern Baal worship were precisely similar; and require no fabled intercourse between the Druids and Pythagoras, to account for its introduction into the west. It was a part of the one lip; the light, the fire, the sun, the moon, and the stars, as heavenly symbols, being the hieroglyphics and instructors. Instead of the more highly-finished temples of warmer climes, the rude circles of Druidical stones attest the same astronomical and astrological intention. Many of these circles on high places, to this day, bear the same name as in the east,—*Gibeons*; and with many of them the name of Baal, or Bel, is, to this day, associated. The Beltein, or shout of Baal, when 'the priests cried and cut themselves, so that the blood ran again,' is still a household word in some parts of Britain, for orgies of a most heathenish kind; and the ordeal by fire is scarcely, yet, a matter of history, in some parts of the highlands of Scotland. Authors have been puzzled to account for the astonishing knowledge in

physiology and astronomy attributed to the Druids, the priests of Baal ; even by those ancient authors who were very far from wishing to speak favourably of them. But their proficiency in such matters,—their addiction to astrology, divination, and other arts, and such glimmerings of their religious dogmas as have been handed down,—just serve to identify them, in every respect, with their brethren in the East,—to establish their recent intercourse with those who were of one lip.

There are other very striking points of similarity ; the consideration of which brings us to a curious portion of their forms, as well as of their tenets. There were, either immediately connected with, or at no great distance from, their high places, groves or caves of great sanctity. They are often mentioned in Scripture in connexion with the worship of Baal. The temple caves in Persia and India have long been celebrated, and have excited much notice ;—the sculptured recesses in Egypt have been often described and depicted ;—the interior of the temples of Belus and other pyramids had their penetralia ;—the caves and groves of Delphos and other places, celebrated in the classics, are familiar to every scholar ;—and there are not wanting evidences of caves and groves near the stone circles and high places of the Druids, the Baal worshippers of the Western world.

The origin of this, we apprehend, is to be found in the early division of theological studies into Exoteric and Esoteric : into what was publicly taught and performed, and what was reserved for

the eyes and ears of the initiated. On the summits of their high places the offerings smoked, in the presence of the congregated people; in the penetralia of their groves, caves, and temples, the doctrines on which the sacrifices and other ceremonies were founded, seem to have been taught.

It is much more intelligible to us why the high places should have been chosen for the worship of the heavenly bodies, whether looked to as symbols or as gods, than why the shade of the tree, or of the grove, should have been selected, for inculcating the higher branches of their theology. We are not, however, altogether without some guide to their footsteps, even when they sought the gloom of the forest. The light of the sun was not only glorious in appearance, it was wonderful in its latent operations, and all pervading in its penetrating power. Trees and shrubs were all emblematical; all attested the hidden or secret power of their great Divinity, or his emblem in the material universe. The trees and groves of Eden, as we took occasion to notice in a former chapter, were figurative; and the shooting forth of vegetable life, not only testified the power of the light or fire, but branches and other vegetable productions became emblematical of the light and its effects. Abraham himself planted an oak (the tree of El, the Irradiator), or a grove, beside the altar of the Lord. The interior of the temple at Jerusalem was decorated with palm trees and opening flowers; and the penetralia of the fire temples had many such ornaments. Hence a grove was called in the Latin tongue

**Lucus**, *light*, not because it was *dark* (a non *lucendo*), as the learned facetiously explain it, but because in it the secret operations of the light were seen, and the hidden wisdom of its worshippers expounded. Hence the Druids (*Druetz*, consultants by the tree) sought for the misseltoe (*mesalta*, the figurative instructor, or shooter-forth); and celebrated the discovery of 'the branch,' which they *cut off*, with the wildest expressions of tumultuous joy. These Druids had their *Bardi* (*beer dai*, great expounders of light); their *Vacerri* (*otzeri*, proclaimers of festivals); their *Eubages* (*euvadi*, testifiers, or preachers, or *Euvatzi*, counsellors, or advisers); and the name of their god was **HESUS**.

There are other circumstances which we shall refer to subsequently, more explanatory of the sacred nature of these groves and penetralia. At present we may just notice, that, while Divine Wisdom saw meet to continue the use of these emblems in the church of old, as formerly enquired into, to inculcate and illustrate heavenly truths; it was seen right, by the head of that church, to prohibit, under the law, any plantation of trees near the temple or altars of the Lord. When the Divine command in this was disregarded, it led, as amongst the heathen, to the grossest abuse of the ceremonies of religion: so that it became 'a shame even to speak of those things which were done of them in the secrecy of these groves.'

It is a singular circumstance, connected with the worship of Baal, and shows how strong the hieroglyphical connexion between light and trees, or



branches, was,—that when fire-worship was transplanted into the temple of the Lord, near which there were no facilities for raising groves, models of groves, or, more probably, gold and silver branches, formed part of the *vessels* introduced with it. In the following passages it is not, indeed, very clear what the various things were, which are mentioned, as having been purged out of the temple, by Josiah, when he reformed the worship there; but the catalogue is curious, instancing how many things may be mixed up with the worship of God, without his authority, and yet men continue to call the worship *his*.

Josiah (2 Kings xxiii.) ordered them—

—‘To bring forth out of the temple of the Lord, all the vessels (ornaments, models, or shrines) made for Baal, and for the grove (Ashrah, consultation by fire), and for all the host of heaven.

—‘He put down the idolatrous priests (he put out the burnings) which the kings of Judah had instituted, when they burned incense in the high places of the cities of Judah and round about Jerusalem; and the censers of Baal to the sun, and to the moon, and to the twelve constellations, and to all the host of heaven.’

—‘And he brought out *the grove from the house of the Lord* without Jerusalem, into the brook Kidron, and burnt it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder.’

—‘And he brake in pieces the models of consecrated things, which were in the house of the Lord, which the women worked there—models of or for the grove.’

—‘ And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, and burnt the chariots of the sun in the fire.’

This allusion to the horses and chariots of the sun, is an early notice of Phœbus (the mouth of fire) with his chariot and horses.

It deserves attention, that *the burning* of those things—the consuming of them by the god or symbol of the god they worshipped, was truly executing judgment on *their gods*. It corresponds well with what Joshua did, when bringing Israel into the promised land. He made the sun stand still on Gibeon (the high place of Baal), and the moon on Aijalon (the grove.) Thus they rested over the very places where they were worshipped; and where the command of Joshua might have been frustrated, if either the priests or the objects of worship had possessed any power.

The references to the worship of Baal throughout the Scriptures, are very numerous; we shall merely quote one or two more, which point out, with great distinctness, the extensive use of the hieroglyphics of trees in that worship.

‘ Bel is a bower-down, Nebo causeth to stoop. Their images were of living creatures and cattle; their oblations wearisome: a prophecy from the branch of a tree.’

‘ My people ask counsel at their stocks (at their tree), and their staff (their shooter forth) declareth to them,’ ‘ they sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills; under oaks (the trees of the irradiator), and poplars (trees of the moon), and elms (Allah, the name of God),

because the shadow thereof (the shaking out thereof) is good.' This singular expression we shall afterwards notice.

To these idolatries Solomon swerved in his old age. To Ashtaro<sup>th</sup> (the shining of the bullock); to Molech (the Messenger), or Milcom (the Messenger to the people); and to Chemosh (the shining of Chimah or the constellations). To these signs of heaven, not only in Egypt, but in the streets of Jerusalem, worship was paid. 'The children gathered wood, the fathers kindled the fire, and the women kneaded the dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven;' and to pour out a drink-offering to 'the troop' of goddesses that were in her train; even all the host of heaven: the Saba, or host, which the Sabæans followed. These became all so many *false lights*, leading away from the pure Urim and Thummim, lights and perfections, of the temple.

We may hazard a conjecture, that, if the Queen of Sheba had returned, and found Solomon in the midst of the many hieroglyphics with which he was surrounded; he would not have wanted arguments to prove to her, how all these different figures and representations were just so many beautiful commentaries on, and practical illustrations of, the Schechinah in the temple. He might have urged that the Schechinah itself could not be understood without such lights; that he found them great aids to his pious feelings; that he could not go a step in the streets of Jerusalem, without meeting some signs of heavenly things—something which drew his mind to devout contemplations. Besides this,

he might say that his wives were many of them strangers; that there were also many strangers about Jerusalem; and that, by this judicious mixture of the signs in use amongst other nations, he rendered those of the temple more attractive to them, and better understood: that, in this way he flattered himself, many were brought to a full understanding respecting the true God, who never would otherwise have had their understandings opened to comprehend heavenly truth. And if the Queen of Sheba had shaken her head, and reminded him of some of those sayings which she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear, and in which he had warned against all such departures from the simplicity of the faith; he might have answered, 'O! I took a very narrow-minded view of matters then. I am now convinced that the one God is adored by all, though under different figures; whatever be the symbol, whatever the name, Jehovah, Jove, or Lord—it is the same God. The name is of little importance, or the mode of worship, if the intention of the worshipper be good.'

Solomon was spared to repent of his folly, and to leave many valuable admonitions; not only warning all who came after him to beware of the Goddess of the Sidonians; but 'to fear God and keep his commandments,' and *his alone*; not attempting to purify them in the fire of Moloch, nor to illustrate them by the light of Baal.

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We must not leave the subject without a few, and they must necessarily be very brief, notices of the ORACLES, for which some of the groves, dedicated to Baal and his successors, were celebrated.

Among the superstitions, which a proneness to alter and add, under the idea of improving, and a distaste for truth in its simplicity, gradually extracted out of the elements of early knowledge, and which cupidity eventually applied to its own base purposes, none was more universal, nor more influential on the customs and opinions of the world, than the idea that trees and groves were the chosen abodes of the Divinity.

To three roots this idea may be distinctly traced. In the first place,—the omnipresence and omnipotence of God were figuratively taught in the universality of light and heat. By-and-by *the figure* became the God, and gave rise to all that system of philosophy which substituted nature for nature's God. In the second place,—the figurative use of trees and branches, as emblems of light or the God of light, was changed into a mystified use of the same emblems, which encouraged the idea that they were actually tenanted by the divinity. In the third place,—traditions regarding the Garden of Eden, and 'one tree in the midst,' as more sacred than others, confirmed the impressions imbibed from the two preceding sources.

These causes seem, very early, to have led to great veneration for certain trees and groves, as the residence of the deity,—and as the chosen spots where his spirit was communicated, and his will

made known to man. A deity pervading and flowing through all nature might, reasonably, be supposed to *emanate* from branches. Hence, in the passage quoted in the preceding chapter, it is said, 'My people ask counsel at their tree, and their branch, or shooter forth, declareth unto them;' they chose the shadow of these trees, because 'the *shaking out* thereof is good.' How strikingly this passage illustrates what is said of the Sibyl, that she shook the branch 'si posset excussisse Deum'—*endeavouring to shake the God out of it!*

Man is ever ready to 'intrude into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.' Not content with the beautifully prophetic and metaphoric use of trees and branches, by which he was divinely instructed at first; he fancied he could gain information of a more private and personal kind, at the same source. Thus we find every hero of old consulting the 'light from the tree,' or the grove, ere he undertook any great or hazardous enterprise—in the same manner as the 'lights and perfections' were consulted in the temple, concerning the great typical events in which the church of God was engaged.

It is observable, however, that, although the Heathens resembled the true church in establishing oracles; the names, rites, and ceremonies of the famous oracles of antiquity, seem rather to bear traces of traditions from Eden, than of imitations of the Urim and Thummim. The oracular places of note were not only called groves, but gardens. We hear of the garden of the Hesperides (Paradise),

with its sacred tree, and the Massylian (quivering or shaking) priestess. The serpent Python (persuasive or subtile) is slain by Apollo—the sun. We are told of the gardens of Adonis (Eden),—the story of Pharmacus (the blotting out of guilt by fire),—and a thousand other acts and truths perverted or allegorised, brought *by* CADMUS—that is, *mi-KEDEM*, from the east, from the ancient place (as the word signifies), whence mankind spread out as from a common centre. The most celebrated of all these groves or gardens was Dodona (do-Eden), founded soon after the time of the flood of Deucalion (the washing away from on high), by a dove (Noah). Then we have the cave of Trophonius (Teraphon, the fiery witness), which owed its celebrity to Saon (a parable or double meaning). To the same Saon most of the fables of antiquity owe their birth and their fame. He is the father of all the troops of Satyrs (hidden things or mysteries) with which the groves were peopled.

By such puerile perversions of figurative teaching and absurd corruptions of traditions, did the ancients ‘plant ideal groves where there never grew an acorn,’ and people real groves with monsters; which the moderns have sublimized into elves and fairies, dancing by moon-light, (speaking allegorically or poetically, in the presence of Titania, the queen of heaven,) under ‘the one tree in the midst.’

It has been a question amongst the learned, whether the ancient oracles were altogether priestly impositions, or whether diabolical inspiration was on some occasions permitted. There can be no

question that, in whatever way the Spirit of God did work miraculously of old, the spirit of the devil was permitted to imitate it. The magicians of Egypt imitated many of the miracles of Moses and Aaron; and as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so false prophets and apostles did wonders resembling those effected by Paul and the other ambassadors of the New Testament. So long as miracles were necessary, so long was the adversary allowed to try the faith of those who witnessed them, by miracles in imitation of them; but when the miraculous powers of the first witnesses to the Messiah ceased, and God's word was completed, by which alone he was henceforth to witness and speak to man, so no power was henceforth permitted to Satan but that of perverting or corrupting that word.

There can be nothing heterodox, therefore, in the supposition that, while God miraculously revealed his will by the Oracle in the Temple at Jerusalem, so long he might permit the voice of demons to be heard in Babylon or at Delphos. At the same time, there is every reason to think that most of the oracular responses had their origin in the easy credulity of a people, who actually imagined that a deity dwelt in a tree. There is no conceivable absurdity or imposition which may not be practised on the man whose diseased mind has converted a sign into a reality; or who can so far forget that he is a reasonable creature, as to mistake a figurative illustration of a heavenly truth for the actual person or shrine of the God of heaven!



The effect of the response or oracle was greatly heightened, to the expectants, by the divinations or incantations which accompanied 'the shaking of the divinity out of the tree.' One of these ceremonies seems to be alluded to by the prophet, when he says, 'and lo! they put the branch to their nose.' Fire, one of the emblems of the God, was always present; into which various articles were thrown, figurative, probably, in their nature like the composition of the holy incense, and in imitation of the censers, carried into the holiest of all, when the oracle was consulted.

The grand distinction between the true and all the false oracles was this, that in the true the voice was clear and explicit; the light, bright and luminous; in the false oracles the voice peeped and muttered, 'as of one who spoke out of the ground.' This is referred to by the prophet in former quotations, and in the following passage, which seems to have been spoken at a time when God refused to answer his people by Urim.

'Bind up the testimony; seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.'

\* \* \* \* \*

'And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter. Should not a people rather seek unto their God, to the testimony of the living ones, and not to the dead?'

One of the most singular customs attending these

oracular divinations, was the introduction of the serpent. It is found to pervade every system of divination throughout the world. That it owes its introduction to the share it had in the first prophetic oracle, delivered in *a garden*, there is every probability. It would not be easy now, to trace it from its first introduction, through the various meanings which it bore, as a hieroglyphic, in the various languages and dialects. The curious enquirer into this subject will find, amongst other singularities, that *nahash*, the name applied to the old serpent, enters into the roots of *seven* words in Hebrew, most of them expressive of acts of sorcery, viz., Divination, Silence, Darkness, Horror, a Lie, Meditation, or bubbling up after long reflection, and the Rehearsing of Coming Events.

There are many other singular circumstances, attending the use of the symbol and of the word, in reference to sorcery; but to notice them would lead to more abstruse enquiries than would suit these pages. We may notice, however, that many have supposed, from the serpent being lifted up in the wilderness as a sign of healing, that its hieroglyphic use was the very opposite of mischief or subtilty. A little consideration will show the fallacy of this. The people were bit by fiery serpents. Moses is commanded to make a serpent of brass, and put it on a pole. When the people looked at it they saw their great enemy, the serpent, dead and nailed to a tree; emblematical of the bruising of the head of its antitype, when the Son of Man was lifted up. The emblem killed and the emblem living were very

different things. The serpent alive was the type of darkness and horror; the serpent killed was the emblem of peace and healing and cure. Hence the two serpents, killed by the infant Hercules, adorn the staff of Esculapius.

If the children of Israel turned the brazen serpent, that symbol of health and peace, into an idol, little is it to be wondered at that the heathen nations should have lost the primitive ideas affixed to the hieroglyphic, dead or alive, or that they should have made it, in many places, an object of adoration. It is observable, that, when Josiah caused the brazen serpent which Moses had made to be removed, on account of the people worshipping it, 'he said of it,' (not only that its original meaning had been lost, but) it had become, 'Nehushtan,' (Nah-Satan,) a seducer to the devil!

Having been induced to glance, thus cursorily, at the subject of sorcery, through its connexion with the oracular groves and trees of Baal, we shall only farther notice that there were several kinds of oracles, in which divination was practised, with the object of prying into futurity. The first, and the most highly estimated, was that attendant on the oracles in the groves, where the priest or priestess was supposed to receive immediate inspiration from the god inhabiting the tree. The second, was the consultation of Dæmons who uttered, or were supposed to utter, the response from the ground. Hence the name Dæmon (responses from the grave.) Those who practised these arts were alluded to in this passage, 'a people that walk after their own

thoughts, that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense on altars of brick (altars formed by the fire they worshipped and consulted), who remain among the graves (Cabirim—the manes of the dead;—hence, those who followed these practices were called Cabiri), and lodge amongst the branches.' To this class the witch of Endor seems to have belonged. It does not appear certain, from the account of what passed when Saul consulted her, whether she could have made any resemblance of Samuel appear to the king through the instrumentality of evil spirits; for she was frustrated in her intentions, by the 'Elohim (gods) ascending out of the earth;' by whom, it seems evident, that Samuel himself *in the body* was introduced; for Samuel himself speaks, and says, 'Why hast thou disquieted me, *to bring me up?*' This phrase, and another expression made use of by him, 'thou and thy sons to-morrow shall be with me,'—leave no room to doubt that the body of Samuel was resuscitated and *brought up*. But whether it were the spirit, or the body of Samuel, or both re-united, it is perfectly clear, by the woman 'crying out,' when she saw him, that if a dæmon had any power or permission to have assisted her in her incantations, it could only have done so by some illusion, and not by any control it could have exercised over the bodies or spirits of the departed.

Whether the practisers of witchcraft, sorcery, or divination, could or could not 'raise the devil,' or through his instrumentality make shadowy forms pass before the devotees; the ceremonies attending the art were accompanied either by the hierogly-

phical emblems of the grove, or by the circles and other hieroglyphics of the heavens. All such figures, from the respect paid to them, through the causes we have already investigated, were calculated to have a powerful effect on the imaginations of the anxious enquirers, and must have completely predisposed them to become the dupes either of men or spirits.

Whatever form, therefore, divination took, it seems all to have originated in a perversion of prophetic figures. Events of the most amazing influence on the destinies of the human race, were not only anticipated, but had been oracularly prophesied of, and were figuratively testified of in the works of creation. So soon as the great subject of all prophecy was lost sight of, or obscured, immediately *the signs* were 'privately interpreted' and applied, as in the case of the heavenly signs at Babylon, to the fortunes of individuals. To this the enemy of the truth doubtless lent his aid, so far as he was permitted. He thereby not only confirmed the world in error, but darkened the meaning of the oracle at Jerusalem; the figurative design of which could scarcely have been obscured if other oracles had not sometimes appeared to pry successfully into future events.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### G O D S.

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WE use this title, in distinction from idols or images, that we may, under it, notice more particularly than has yet been done, the first step in the gradual transformation of hieroglyphics into deities. The land of Egypt offers the best field for this ; as there were judgments executed upon her gods at a period prior to any intimation of figures of wood or stone, 'graven by art or man's device,' having had divine honours paid to them.

The similarity has already been pointed out, between the pyramids (pyr-omed, an edifice dedicated to fire) and the Migdol, or great building, on the plains of Chaldea. Such a similarity implies an early coincidence between the two religions—a coincidence confirmed by the whole of the Egyptian Mythology. The difference between the religion of Chaldea and that of Egypt, seems to have been this : in Chaldea and the neighbouring nations the heavens were the great object of attraction ; and all their mystic studies, accordingly, were of an astrological cast. In Egypt, the genius of the

people being of a still more mystical and gloomy shade, there were combined with their astrological hieroglyphics, a vast array of symbols of a peculiar kind; arising partly from local circumstances, and partly from the earnest attention which they seem, from the earliest ages, to have bestowed on the subject of *the resurrection of the body*.

When Mizraim broke off from the Babel union, and departed into Egypt, he carried with him, of course, the same symbols that were recognised on the plain of Shinar. The light, the heat, and the fire, were, with all, the leading metaphors; and the sun, moon, and constellations, the hieroglyphics illustrative of them. While, therefore, the Easterns had their Baal and Ashteroth, the king and queen of heaven, the Egyptians had OSIRIS (the enricher), the principle of light and heat, of which the sun was the chief symbol in creation; and ISIS, the going out and the coming back of that light, of which the moon was the type in the heavens. Thus, when they represented the sun and the moon, hieroglyphically, the figures of Osiris and Isis found a place in their temples.

But Isis was, with them, a type not only of the moon, but of the earth. The cause of this involves a curious peculiarity in their religion.

It has been already noticed, that their minds seemed to take a strong bent towards enquiries regarding a future state, and the resurrection of the body. No nation ever paid so much attention to the preservation of the body after death, or were so careful in the *wrapping up*. The resemblance,

indeed, between a mummy, or embalmed body, and the chrysalis, is most striking. As all their acts were symbolical, there is evidently in this the type of the same thing which is preached in the type of the chrysalis; a figure of the folding up, or first change of the body, noticed at large in a former chapter.

Isis seems to have been the deity which presided over this *separate state*. Her name is Is-Is (or ish-ish, *light-light*); the shining forth; then the pause; and then *the double*, or shining forth the second time. When she is shut up, or embalmed and wrapped up, she then represents the earth in the absence of light and heat. The dust is returned to dust. She goes to seek Osiris. In that search we have to follow her to the shades below. There, we hear of Typhon (burning); and then it is that the 'weeping for Thammuz' takes place. While this is going on, mention is made of Anubis (the foretelling of the budding forth again), preparatory to the introduction of Ptha (the opener). This Ptha, the opener of the grave, is the great mysterious person of the drama, with the incommunicable name, who alone can prevail to open the secret of the grave. Hence Isis said, '*No mortal* should ever lift her veil.' By the agency of the immortal Ptha, Osiris is restored; and the worshippers are raised from the depth of distress, indicated by the wildest ullaloo, to the most exuberant expressions of triumphant joy; accompanied by all the hieroglyphical branches and other signs, indicative of the re-appearance of light.



Such appears to have been the leading principle of the earliest Egyptian religious ceremonies ; in which the light and fire were taken as emblems of life to come, and in which those emblems were personified, and identified with the sun and moon. We may easily see how, at first, such a system may have been nothing but symbolical, and may have preached the very doctrines which gave life, light, and joy, as formerly ascertained, in the path of the just.

But this impersonation of the figures led, as in other nations, and beyond all other nations, to a host of figures, countless in number and monstrous in their combinations, borrowed from the sky, the earth, and the waters. Every conjunction of the sun or moon with a star or a constellation, became, first, an event in the lives of Osiris and Isis ; then, the conjunction was marked by combining the sign of the constellation with human figures ; and by-and-by, when the figurative key was lost, every such combination became a new God in their mythology. Peculiar local circumstances, too, introduced many singular additions. The fecundity of Egypt was so dependent on the Nile, that their feasts and rejoicings were regulated by the rise and fall of that river. Lamentations for Isis were mixed with mournings for deficiency in the rise of the fruitful river ; and rejoicings for Osiris were mingled with shouts, as they saw the flood attain the desired mark. Hence other hieroglyphical signs, connected with the rise of the river, were added to a line of figures, which already stretched out to the crack of

doom ; and, by-and-by, the river itself, by aid of its hieroglyphs, attained to a place among the gods.

To attempt, now, to unravel such a mass of monsters, which had even in the days of Moses increased to an extent that drew down the Divine judgments, would be as vain, as, even were it practicable, it would be unprofitable. We shall only look at a few more of those hieroglyphical impersonations, which identify their primitive religion with 'the one lip;' and then consider, briefly, the nature of the judgments which Jehovah executed on 'all the gods of Egypt.'

We have ascertained that light, or fire, was the primary element in their system. They had one city, in particular, dedicated to its worship, or elucidation, called On, *divination*. It would thus appear that divination, or enquiry into future events, was with them, as with the other fire professors, connected with their religious ceremonies. Among them, also, the cherubic figures were known; although they were no longer used, simply, as emblems or doctrines, but were *dedicated* to the fire. The ox, the lion, and the eagle, which in the cherubim were seen unhurt in the fire, were, with them, dedicated to the sun, and were all used as emblems of the light. Hence, the Israelites said, 'they could not sacrifice (not the *abominations*, but) the *dedicated things* of the Egyptians before their eyes.'

We see, also, amongst them, other curious uses and combinations of the cherubic figures, sadly mutilated indeed, but still indicating some tradition of an earlier and better use. The Sphinx (Tsphana,

the secret or riddle) had part of a lion and part of a bullock: the body on which they were engrafted being that of a *woman* instead of a man. Here was Nature, or materialism, substituted for what the cherubim, in their pure form, inculcated. There were other Sphinxes, in which the head of the eagle appears, and wings are added. Stories are told of a Phoenix (Phœnim, the faces, a name often applied in Scripture to the cherubim); which is burnt, but rises from its own ashes, amidst the flames. There was Serapis (Seraph), with the bull, one of the cherubic ensigns, as his chosen emblem; and wings projecting from a ball of fire, were the protecting Numen (covering) over every consecrated porch.

While the Priests of Egypt (the first-born, as in other nations) were busy adding figure to figure, to elucidate the truth, as they would no doubt consider it, the hand of Heaven interfered, and, by the nature of the judgments, testified against this growing and dangerous superstition; against the error of ascribing to *signs* the power which belongs, also, to the Most High alone.

The rod or branch, one of the hieroglyphs of light, and one of their prime agents in divination, is converted into a serpent. The magicians, or fire priests of Egypt, were in too close union with the old serpent, not to be able to imitate this miracle; but Aaron's rod swallowed up theirs. They were thus taught, that the God of Israel might permit, for a time, the wiles of the serpent; but would, eventually, defeat them; nor permit any divination

or enchantment to prevail against his decrees, or the people of his choice.

The waters of their river, now held as little less than a god, are turned to blood. The vile animals which that river produced, and which were used, if not to represent the godhead, to betoken his attributes, fill their cities and fields, till the land stinks with them.

The dust of that earth, the fruitfulness of which made even *it* obtain a personification and a place among their sacred things, is turned into insects; the name of which (Cunnin) seems to indicate that the judgment was against the hieroglyphs of the profession called Chiun, in which cakes, bearing that name, were offered to Isis, the queen of heaven.

So hatefully is truth mixed up with error, in the animal forms pourtrayed in their temples, that Oreb (a mixture—translated in our Bible *swarms of flies*, the two last words being supplementary), is sent *grievously* on them. It would appear, in this judgment, as if heaven had caused such creatures to swarm as nature had never brought forth, till their own monstrous mixture of doctrine called for such a miracle.

Their cattle, and in a particular manner those which were dedicated, and were sumptuously fed and lodged, were struck with diseases, which made them loathsome even in the ditches.

The Fire,—not the ashes, as it is translated,—but the burning coals of the perpetual fire (mis-translated furnace), kept up to Baal and Moloch,—the fire

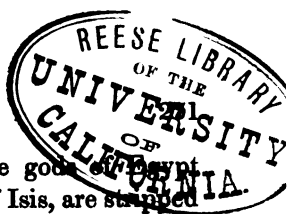
from this altar is sprinkled towards *heaven*, towards the figures of their gods, and, instead of *purifying*, it breaks out into grievous sores upon man and beast, which attack even the priests employed in keeping that fire alive.

Hail mingled with fire — to show that even their god had not power sufficient to melt the congealed particles which were mixed with him—hail and fire run through the land. But, being servants of him who maketh his ministers a flame of fire, they keep within the limits prescribed to them.

Locusts are sent, or rather a species of beetle. That animal was highly honoured by the devotees of the Sphinx, or the materialists, (for every sect found toleration in Egypt,) being, it was supposed, a *self-producer*. But, instead of being self-produced, it came with an east wind, and ate up every remnant of fruitfulness in the land.

The light they fell prostrate to, becomes thick darkness, darkness that might be felt; while the children of Israel have it in their dwellings, not as a god, but as a gift from its Creator.

One plague more on the gods themselves has to be executed, ere judgment reaches their ministers. The Israelites *ask*, (they do not borrow, for ‘the man Moses was mighty in the land,’) the Israelites *ask* their consecrated things—their household gods of gold and silver—their jewelled representations of the sacred emblems, and the Egyptians give them! They give them those little images, or representations, or symbols of sacred things, which, in every idolatrous church, constitute the riches and the



*jewels* of the worshippers; and the gods of Egypt are spoiled, the shrines of Diana, of Isis, are stripped bare!

The last bolt of Divine vengeance has now to be shot. The first-born, the dedicated both of man and beast, are struck by the destroying angel; and there is not a house, nor a temple, in which the cry of lamentation is not heard!

We said it was the last, and still one judgment remains to be executed. The doctrine of the resurrection, which, at first, led to that decent attention to the relics of the dead, which is comely in every nation and in every age, had been carried the length of a seeming expectation that Osiris and Isis would not only come to life themselves, but reanimate all who were found encased in their sacred emblems. On this account the Egyptians seem to have preserved, with so much care, the remains of all their friends; and the bodies of those who held a prominent place in the public eye were guarded with no common anxiety. Among these, their benefactor Joseph occupied a conspicuous place. He had been embalmed and put in a *soros*, or sarcophagus, in Egypt. He, knowing too well the prejudices of the people, gave no directions that immediately after his death he should be carried to Machpelah. He instructed them to wait until the time, which he prophetically foresaw would arrive, when they would leave Egypt, with a high hand and an outstretched arm. They were *then* to take his bones with them; to show the Egyptians that it was not through Joseph's connexion, in embalming, with Osiris and

Isis, that he looked for the resurrection, but through the power of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.

The time Joseph prophesied of now arrived. A king arose 'who knew not Joseph:' he knew him not in his true character, and therefore oppressed his kinsmen; but it was not at all inconsistent, at the same time, to 'garnish the sepulchre' of their ancestor. The Egyptians have to be taught that God disapproves of this species of idolatry. Joseph had beforehand known so well the fate of his bones in Egypt, that 'swearing he had sworn' his brethren to take them up. So, when Moses leaves Egypt, he took away by violence (as the word signifies), the bones of Joseph, out of their stately mansion to the more humble Machpelah, of which the Egyptians had not only *heard*, but which they had *seen*, when they accompanied Joseph to the funeral of his father, and mourned with him there thirty days.

It may be thought that we have been drawing on imagination for this scene, attending the Exodus from Egypt. But it is surely a very wonderful circumstance, and one which, taken in connexion with the scripture record concerning the bones of Joseph, warrants every word we have written,—that, four thousand years after the Exodus, we should have the testimony of a respected and credible witness, (Dr. E. D. Clark,) that a Pyramid, the most holy of all the holy places, had, at some very remote period, been forced open, and a body stolen from the sors or stone coffin in which it had been secured! We refer to the irresistible arguments of Dr. Clark him-

self to prove that this could have been no other but the body of Joseph; seeing that neither the Egyptians themselves, nor an invading army, would have coveted such a booty; and, seeing that there are, not merely traditions of such an event among them, but direct allusions to it in their religious ceremonies and observances.

What a sad but striking picture of human nature is thus disclosed to us! The Egyptian priests, so far from being cured of their fondness for multiplicity of altars and of gods by the judgment which had been executed, find, in that very judgment, an argument to fix their idolatry more deeply in the hearts of the people. There seems every reason to believe, from what Dr. Clark and other travellers have related, that the abstraction of Joseph's body was represented to the people as the ablation of the body of Osiris himself. It would, thus, be presumed, that the whole had been a preconcerted scheme of the Israelites to obtain the body, and deprive them of their most sacred relics. Osiris was thus made more of a divinity than ever, and the name of Joseph became associated with his, at their festivals and in their religious ceremonies.

In reading of the judgments which the Lord executed upon all the gods of Egypt, it is not necessary to presuppose that the Egyptians were idolaters in the common acceptation of the term; that is, that they actually supposed the emblems to be gods, or that they set up certain figures of stone, and supposed them inhabited by the divinity. There are several reasons against such a supposition.



When Joseph was carried into Egypt, and rose there to be second only to Pharaoh, he married a daughter of the priest of On; which it is scarcely credible he would have done had that priest been engaged in an open profession of idolatry. Joseph's situation at the court, also, gave him great opportunity of reproof and correcting the national religion, had it been of this nature; of which, however, there is no intimation. Coupling these circumstances with the silence of Scripture on the subject, we are warranted to believe that the religion of Egypt, at the time of the Exodus, was not one in which stocks and stones had been set up as deities; but one in which they were multiplying and corrupting symbols so rapidly, as to obscure the truth of God, changing it into a lie; and, in many cases, ascribing powers to the agents in creation, which were alone to be attributed to the Lord God of Hosts. Unauthorised additions, even for the ostensible purpose of elucidation and improvement, and multiplication of emblems, are as much corruptions of the truth of God, as the setting up of stocks and stones as his representatives. They form the first and great step towards that species of idolatry, or image worship, which forms the subject of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### IDOLS.

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WHEN the sun and moon were personified, or represented hieroglyphically by human figures, as in Egypt, and it is probable also in Chaldea and other countries, every conjunction, as formerly noticed, of the emblems in the heavens with the figures portrayed there, became an event in the history of the ideal personages on earth. Those events were hieroglyphically recorded, by connecting the original figure with the sign or figure in juxtaposition with it. Thus a number of ideal personages arose, all 'children of the sun.'

Besides this origin for the numerous progeny of the sun and moon, there is no doubt, from circumstances already repeatedly adduced in the course of this enquiry, that there were some truths, acknowledged by the true worshippers, which were hieroglyphically taught in the heavens. These hieroglyphs were generally in animal forms; and as corresponding forms were used in God's own revelations to illustrate his truths, we are warranted to assume, that, at the time of the one lip, when those

truths were professedly believed in by mankind generally, the signs representing them would be generally adopted, and generally understood.

The danger lay in multiplying the images, and in losing the key. Both corruptions arose. The figures were multiplied according to the taste of the various nations. The key was gradually lost. The first effect of this, was to lead the worshippers to think of some secret or indefinable sanctity about the emblem; then to ascribe supernatural powers to it; and, finally, to deify it.

It does not appear, however, that in any ancient nation, however deep it sank in idolatry, that the images or idols set up, in which the hieroglyphics of their religion were combined, were *universally* considered as *the* god himself. By many they were considered merely as symbols still. Even those who fancied that the image was a god, or that a god resided within it, must generally have seen a reason for *the form* in which the god was made or pourtrayed. Only the lowest of the low in intellect, education, or habits, could ever have imagined that God had a superfluous number of feet, or hands, or arms; that he had the head of a hawk or of an elephant, the breast of a woman, or the tail of a fish. These were *emblems* of the *attributes* of the god they had formed or fancied to themselves.

But whether the worshippers fancied the combined form to be the god himself, or a representation of the attributes they ascribed to him, it was equally a *changing of the glory* of God, according to the fancy or caprice of man. The grand error

lay in changing representations of truths, or ideas, into representations or emblems of the godhead. Thus they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into AN IMAGE made like to corruptible man, and to four-footed beasts and creeping things.

Most nations seem to have made gods of their own out of the hieroglyphical elements they possessed. Others, like the Greeks and Romans, stole them ready made. But, whether original or borrowed, it is most interesting to trace in the names or hieroglyphics bestowed on them, so much of the primitive ideas; borrowed from those hieroglyphics which we have already found entered so largely into the early instruction, in divine matters, revealed to man. We have found the same early worship in the West of Europe and in the centre of Asia,—from which worship the Thor, thunderer, of the North, and the Jupiter Tonans of the South, had, in process of times, ‘a local habitation and a name.’ On the low sands of Persia, and the high plains of Peru, the same symbols appear;—and the Virgins of the sun are sisters of the vestals at Rome, who kept alive the sacred lamps in honour of the goddess of fire.

As our object in this chapter is, however, to point out some of the primitive ideas contained in the forms or names of IDOLS, properly so called; and as the mythology of the Greeks and Romans will claim separate notice, we propose, here, turning to that part of the world where image worship, even in our own day, is carried to the greatest height; and to judge, by a few investigations into the

mythology of India, whether we are justified in ascribing to all idol worship a hieroglyphical origin.

The mythological system in India is so extensive, so perplexed and ramified, that it is well known neither Sir William Jones' admirable works, nor Maurice's laborious volumes, have done more than introduce us to the threshold. We can attempt, therefore, nothing bordering on an analysis of it: but only point to some leading objects as proving its parentage.

The idol, certainly, at the head of the system, is the trinitarian combination of Brahma, Seeva, and Veeshnu—Brahma (the great creator)—Seeva (the silent worker)—Ve (and) Ishnu (the man with us).

Of all the extant idols of antiquity, this is certainly the most interesting and remarkable, differing in no respect from the revelation made to the people of God respecting the Elohim. The only shade of difference consists in this: while the Hebrews dwelt more on the circumstance that the Saviour was to be a God (Immanu-el—God with us), the ancient Hindu theology reversed the mode of expression, and said Ish-nu—the man with us. Still that man was, even according to them, to be God incarnate.

This Ishnu is also styled Budha (Phudah, the Redeemer), Pagod or Pagog (the Intercessor), and Foe or Foah (the breather, or life-giver.) Under these names he is worshipped through an immense extent of country and a countless population, under the figure of a man sitting and meditating. The amazing number of small casts and representations of this figure, which are found throughout the east,

indicates that they are used there as crucifixes are by the Romish church. From the attitude of the figure it may be supposed to be intended to remind the worshippers of his incarnation.

But this Ishnu or Veeshnu, as well as Brahma and Seeva, assume various forms, according to the offices and works they have to perform. Indeed, when we look narrowly into the Hindoo Mythology, we shall find that there is not an act or thought attributed to any one of their gods, which is not symbolised and represented by some figure or figures. Hence the countless numbers of their deities, and the endless forms in which they appear or are portrayed; and hence no two authors agree in their description of them.

Amidst such a mass of confusion, there are occasional glimpses to be obtained of the foundation on which this gorgeous mass of idolatry was reared, by analysing the names of some of the hieroglyphics. Their great first cause, Brahma, on calling the universe into existence, made a goddess Bowaney (understanding, or wisdom). This is a personification or hieroglyphical representation of the saying, that 'God by wisdom made the heavens.' From this Bowaney sprung Brimha (Brahma again, under another form), Seeva, and Veeshnu: another allegory, importing that the Wisdom of God is seen in the threefold revelation he has made of himself.

This Bowaney again is seen on the back of a bullock. She is represented with eight arms and hands; one of which has hold of the horn (the emblem of the power) of the devil (a black figure,

called Messaroor, the oppressive rebel), who has cut off the head of the bullock on which Bowaney rides ; while she, with another arm, is thrusting a javelin through the body of the demon. The type of the destruction of Evil by Wisdom, is in this very evident ; while the decapitation of the bullock may be meant to represent the sacrifices which were to take place, ere that was effected.

Veeshnu goes through many adventures, under many names and aspects. We see him as Bal Kreeshen (the Baal, Hercules, Apollo, or Sun of their mythology), attended by nine Gopia, or Muses. In this character he undergoes, like the western Hercules, many labours ; *twelve* in particular, each of which, of course, adds a new hieroglyphic, that is, a new god, to the calendar. If there were any doubt of these twelve labours referring to the passage of the sun through the signs of the zodiac, it is removed by a set of Indian cards, now before us, 144 in number. These cards are of ivory, beautifully painted in enamel. There are twelve *suites*, each suit having a sign of the zodiac painted on it, from one to twelve times ; and these signs, as mentioned in a former chapter, *nearly correspond with the modern European division of the zodiac*. The *court cards* have Veeshnu, on horseback, going forth at the head of every several sign ; and, what is perhaps more worthy of notice than any other circumstance, is, that in every case, he is attended by his wife Lutzmee (*interpretation !*)

In other representations we see Veeshnu, attended

by the same female, resting the golden mace on the ground (in that respect copying, or setting an example to, the western Hercules); and in another of his four hands he holds aloft a flower, just budding into life, an emblem of the resurrection. At other times he is an infernal god, dark in colour, having gone, like Isis to seek Osiris, and Orpheus in quest of Eurydice, to the shades below. Under another form he appears as Cundoba (the powerful Word), seated on a *white horse*, with a sword in one hand. His wife is still with him, on horseback; under a different name, however, Malsee; but still bearing the same meaning; viz. the interpretation of a proverb or figure.

Many others of these figures might be noticed, in which, with no other key than the, probably, much corrupted names, brought to this country by Europeans, we can obtain glimpses of an evident systematic mode of hieroglyphic teaching in their original formation. Even these glimpses are curious; and, we have no doubt, would receive remarkable confirmation, if we had any means of ascertaining the Sanscrit names; not so much of the figures themselves, as of the insignia they bear. As one instance of the interest which attaches to the names of some of these gods in Sanscrit, it is mentioned on some Sanscrit brazen tablets, presented to the Literary Society of Bombay, that 'in ancient times there was a demi-god, named Iimuta Vahana (he dies, and behold he lives), who, for the sake of another, gave his life a sacrifice.'



There are some circumstances relative to these hieroglyphical representations generally, which seem to deserve attention.

In the first place, taken in connexion even with the vague and corrupted Hindu traditions, there is evident reference made in them to some of the great primeval truths; and certainly if not a direct attempt to represent the incarnation, something amazingly like it. But,

In the second place; although the triune figure from Elephanta, already referred to, is doubtless meant to convey some idea of Trinity in Unity, and may therefore be called a representation of God; yet the number of heads, arms, and other members, given to the representations in general, intermixed as they are with the heads and limbs of animals, will scarcely permit the supposition that the first pourtrayers of such figures actually intended them for representations of deities. When the key to them became corrupted, or lost, they may have become *gods* in vulgar estimation; but the original combination was evidently hieroglyphical or doctrinal.

In the third place. The *number* of the heads and arms usually given, is curious. The heads are in general *four*; and the hands or arms *eight*. Now the heads of the great antediluvian hieroglyphic were *four*; and, as it is described to have had the appearance of a hand under the wings, the hands would also either be four or eight, as the figure was single or double.

On looking westward from Ararat, then, we find

that all the colonies, who removed in that direction, had one custom in religious matters. When they wanted to express a religious opinion, they engrafted the representation of it upon the body of a man, in the same manner as the truth itself was symbolised at Eden. They varied the engraftings to suit their own taste and ideas. Having lost the true meaning of the Edenic symbols, or disliking them, they were sparing of the brute hieroglyphics; and doubtless thought that a number of human heads, or the head of the sagacious elephant, was much more expressive of wisdom, watchfulness, and sagacity.

Yet the cherubic forms were never lost sight of; although they entered but sparingly into those hieroglyphical representations of doctrines, which have since become *gods*. As these forms had appeared *in the fire*, they were, in the East as well as in Egypt, dedicated to the fire, and held sacred. The ox was held so in a particular manner, for they have not only dedicated him and the cow, but deified them. The man became Baal, Moloch, Kreeshnu, or the sun; and the lion, the eagle, and the bullock or its horns, alternately expressed, hieroglyphically, the light of the sun, of the moon, or of the lesser luminaries.

There were other mythological figures, also, in which the cherubic forms were very distinctly retained. The Griffon (revolving faces) had the hoof of the ox, the body of a lion, and the head and wings of an eagle. The head of a lion, united to that of a man, forms one of the penates or house-

hold gods of India; some of which we have seen beautifully carved in ivory.

Even the fairy legends which are brought from the East, have their rich embellishments copiously intermixed with the most ancient sacred emblems. What are popularly called the adventures of their genii or fairies, are often the hieroglyphical and symbolical history of the transmutations of their gods. We have now before us one of these gorgeous volumes, purporting to contain a tale, common both to Persia and Hindostan; in which, among other illustrations, an old and a young man are seated on an open palanquin, borne through the air by *four winged creatures*, each of them having the form of a man, with the head of a lion on one, the head of an ox on another, the head of an eagle on a third, and the head of a dog on the fourth.

We cannot bid adieu to the clime of the sun, with all its richness of imagery (however polluted now, alas! and debased), without a parting glance at two of their most renowned sages, Confucius and Zoroaster; called, in the eastern tongues, Confutsee and Zerdusht. We are afraid it will break the thread of many a fine-spun theory, respecting these worthies, and spoil many an embryo dissertation on the excellence of their precepts, if the meaning of their names is whispered; for, if that meaning is to be trusted, we suspect the existence of such philosophers, at any period, becomes a very dubious matter. Both names signify '*dancing forth into joy at the appearance of the light*'—a meaning which, it is to be feared, being applicable to both, identifies both;

and establishes the terms as significant, not of two sages, but of the universality, at one period, in Asia, of that worship in which light and fire were the predominant emblems.

One word more with Zoroaster, and we have done. His great and leading doctrine was the metempsychosis, or transmigration of the soul of man into the bodies of animals. When we strip this, as we have done the philosopher himself, of the halo of antiquity, we find in it neither more nor less than a misinterpretation and misunderstanding of their own hieroglyphics. In those hieroglyphics the same figure appears under various animal forms, according to the doctrine or idea which that form was intended to inculcate ; and the mutation of an opinion became the transmigration of a soul ! It is difficult to know whether to laugh at or weep over the cogitations of the wise Greeks on the doctrine of *the metempsychosis*.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE MYSTERIES.

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TURNING from the eastern to the western world, and enquiring what use the Greeks had made, or what traces remained among them, of the instruction carried from the east by their forefathers, we are naturally led to the groves of Eleusis for an answer to the enquiry. Although silence stands at the threshold, and the votaries have not dared to tell us *all* the secrets of her chambers, they have revealed enough to satisfy us, that the 'hidden wisdom' of these groves was drawn from a branch of the same stream which at first enriched the east, but which was defiled and polluted whithersoever, the waters went out.

The first circumstance which must arrest our attention, on entering the sacred groves of Greece, is the division, as in all other ages and countries, of the mythological mysteries, as well as temples, into two or more departments, the exoteric and esoteric; the open display of figurative emblems, and the secret development of these emblems to the initiated.

The ceremonies attending the Eleusinian mysteries were multiform; but they seem, generally speaking, to have been in three progressive stages. In the preparatory stage, the neophytes prepared themselves by fastings and ablutions. In the second stage, various figures and forms were exhibited; and in the third and last step of the instructive process, the aspirants were initiated, privately, into the hidden meaning or spirit of the symbols displayed. Hence they were called *Teletæ*; a word signifying not only *three*, but *perfection*.

When we compare this mode of initiation with the plan of instruction followed by an inspired writer, in developing the mysteries or figures of the Old Testament, we shall be struck with the similarity. In the first place, he prepares his readers by divesting them of prejudiced views, for the free exercise of their understanding as men. He then exhibits to them the carnal ordinances or symbols of the Old Testament, and then says, 'let us go on *to perfection*;' that is, he proposes to take them *within the veil*, into the holiest of all, and to expound the spirit and meaning of the symbols, exhibited there and in the outer court.

We do not mean to say that Paul in this *imitated* the Greek philosophers—far from it. But we think the coincidence and similarity amply deserving our attention; inasmuch as it tends to establish and verify the views we have laid before the reader, regarding *the mode* of instruction, invariably followed, throughout the world, and among the people and church of God, previous to the coming of the

Messiah. In all and in both it was essentially figurative and hieroglyphical. The difference between them consisted in this. In the church of God, under the Old Testament, they were *hedged in* by the law, 'shut up unto the faith which was afterwards to be revealed.' Into the holiest of all went the high priest *alone*, once every year, and not without blood; the Holy Ghost thus testifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. By this, by many injunctions, by the ritual and by the words of the prophets, the Spirit of God strove with that rebellious people, and spoke to them of *another* day. When that day, the day of the Messiah, came, the Apostles went boldly into the holiest of all, now laid open; and preached unto them, from these figures, Jesus and the resurrection; those figures which the Spirit of God had been preserving, in the temple, from the sacrilegious hands and imaginations of man; who would have perverted them, as he did every figure or truth which was revealed or delivered to him.

Among the gentile nations, on the other hand, the same figures became debased and corrupted. They changed the truth of God. They still used symbols, but these symbols so altered and enlarged in number, that the figurative design was lost sight of. Instead of being looked upon as open public testimonies, to a great event looked forward to, and to be desired of all nations, they were changed into *mysticisms*. The worshippers, instead of waiting, as they would have done, had they retained the key to these signs till Shiloh came, for their full exposition, went in with

the priests of Eleusis, into the secrecies of their temples, and took such expositions as the priests chose to give them of the spirit and meaning of what had been exhibited to them in the second stage of their initiation.

It is not now known what kind of religion, morality or immorality, the priests preached from the symbols. The first, judging from the writings of the Greek philosophers, had been any thing rather than the ancient hope of eternal life, through an expected Saviour; and the second was probably varied a good deal, according to the taste of the preacher. We are not much concerned to know what kind of sermons they gave; the most interesting part of their ceremonies to us is, to find exhibited, in the groves of Greece, the same figures and personages to whom we have been introduced in Chaldea, in Egypt, and in India.

Accordingly, one of the first *persons* we meet there, is a double character, from whom we lately parted, called Confucius, in China, and Zoroaster, in Persia; now become the Autopsia of Eleusis. Ammon, Baal, and Osiris are now introduced to us as Helios (the most high); or as Hercules (Ariochel, the lion of God); who, when he descends into Hades, to seek his wife Eurydice (the hidden light), becomes Orpheus (killed), Apollo (hidden), and Bacchus (weeping). Such figures or forms as these are accompanied by Fauns (Phanni, the *faces*, already noticed); by Satyrs (hidden things, or parables); by Demiurgus (the resemblance of death), a man of an azure colour, shaded with black (the



Veeshnu of the Indians when he descends to Hades); with an ark or coffin carried by Camphoræ (Cnephoræ), the attendants of Cneph (*the winged*); followed by Pictures of Elysium (shouting for joy). In these and the other figures, exhibited to the Neophytes, we see the resemblances, or copies under different names, of the forms we have been surveying in Egypt and India.

Although, therefore, we may not be admitted into the secret chambers of Eleusis; when we see such objects exhibited in the outer court, we may safely conclude, that the instruction given within would bear a very marked resemblance to the higher branches of all the eastern philosophy or theology. The Epoptæ, or those to whom the mysteries were *laid open*, would probably have different interpretations given them, at different periods; and it must probably remain secret to us in what proportions truth and error were mixed up in the elucidations. The only matter of interest to us, now, is having ascertained, that, in Greece, as well as in Egypt and all the East, the same figurative mode of teaching, by the same emblems, was practised. The disposition to philosophise and investigate, probably prevented the priests from teaching, or the votaries of Eleusis fancying, that the figures exhibited were actual gods: but it would have humbled the pride of these sages and their disciples not a little, had they been aware that such a multitude of mysteries were merely reduplications of one great truth; and that, while they fancied themselves wiser than all who preceded them, they were merely joining, in

their own corrupt way, with all the rest of the world, in bearing testimony that there had been a time when the hope of the resurrection was universal—a time when that hope, at which, when afterwards it was preached by Saul of Tarsus, some of them ‘mocked, and others said we will hear thee again of this matter,’ gave lustre to science and dignity to philosophy.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE PANTHEON.

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A VERY few words will suffice for the consideration of the Roman Mythology, generally called the Pantheon, or gods collected into one group; all these gods, by the universal consent of the learned, being mere plagiarisms from the Greek, Egyptian, and Phœnician deities. When they reached Rome, however, they became more veritable men and women than they had been before; their fathers and mothers were determined, and the whole family tree well arranged.

Can there be imagined a more deplorable prostitution of the human intellect, than the employment of it to fix the æra, the country, and the genealogy of the Roman Jupiter, Juno, Vulcan, and Venus: to follow them through their obscene and filthy adventures; to luxuriate over the amours, or to bewail the misfortunes of creatures, which, if they ever had existed, would have been a disgrace to humanity, to say nothing of divinity? If such a study must have been degrading, even in 'times of ignorance,' what can be thought of it, as an ornamental branch of

learning, — as an exercise for the youthful mind, in times and in a country upon which ‘the true light,’ has dawned? Fixing the birth-place, parentage, and education, gloating over the loves and debaucheries, of *corrupted* HIEROGLYPHICS!! It would be difficult to turn to a more degrading chapter in the economy of human life.

The collection of all the gods into one circle, or Pantheon, at Rome, just before all the gods of the nations were silenced by the appearance of the God of gods and Lord of lords, is a curious feature in the history of Polytheism. The hieroglyphics, from which these figures originally sprung, were those which represented the light, or formed the cherubic combination called the *Paneim*, or faces. Every sacrifice of old was brought ‘*le Panei Jehovah* ;’ translated, ‘*before the Lord* ;’ literally, ‘to the presence of Jehovah ;’ indicated by that cherubic memorial of his truth in which he dwelt. This hieroglyphic memorial was copied, perverted, and divided into the various forms, at which we have glanced, in various countries ; and were combined, in them all, with the hieroglyphics of the firmament, in which the truth of God had been declared to every nation under heaven. These corruptions of the *Panei* were seen, not only in the *Pan*-theon, but in the *Panthea*, or *Pen*-ates, the household gods, or teraphim ; which, in every nation, seem to have been miniature representations of the *Panei*, or resemblances, exhibited in the temples and in the sacred groves ; and ‘*Io PÆAN*,’ was the shout which welcomed Isis and Apollo, on their return to light and life.

Ere the True Light shone forth, which was to eclipse and confound all the false lights that were deceiving the world, these hieroglyphics had become imaginary beings, or actual gods of wood and stone, gold and silver, throughout all the earth. Fo, Budha, Veeshnu, and Mithras, in the East, were enshrined on earth, and their places secured in heaven. Osiris, Isis, and Anubis had the same honours paid them, and the same places allotted them, in the south. In Greece, Dionysius, Helios, and Orpheus were to be seen occupying the same places, under different names. Paca Camac (the opening up of the circle, by the sun), had divine honours paid to him in Peru: Thor (the sign of light), with his thunderbolt, was heard in the distant west; and Odin, or Woden (the testifier), had his altars in the frozen north. The more elegant forms of Jupiter (Jah-pater), or Jove, with his thunderbolt (the god that answereth by fire), with *the Eagle* as the bearer of it, *the Ox*, sacred to him, and *the Lion* led by Cupid (the hand of love), took the seat of honour in the temples at Rome; while Hebe (life), ministered to this singular corruption of the cherubic forms. Cneph (the winged messenger of fire), was there changed into the winged Mercury. The dove, another sacred emblem, which attended Ashtaroth, the queen of heaven in the east, waited on Venus or Juno (the dove), at Rome. The Indian fable of Bowaney (wisdom), the mother of the gods, was there changed into the birth of Minerva out of the head of Jupiter. We find Veeshnu going through all his labours again at Rome, under the name of

**Hercules**; and when clothed, in either clime, with the skin of the lion, forming that first, and most striking, combination of the cherubic figures, the man and the lion. Mahadew fights all his battles o'er again as Mars. Pluto succeeds Typhon; and Tisiphone and her sisters realise all the horrors of the ancient Baal-*Zephon*.

Imagination sickens as it traces out these hateful perversions of primitive truths, now changed into *gods* or their attendants; chiseled in marble; immortalized in verse; the adoration of the proud Romans, and the admiration of the enlightened moderns!

It is narrated by Plutarch, that, about the period of our Lord's birth, the pilot, Thamus, heard voices in the air, proclaiming 'the Great Pan is dead.' Whether the story be true or fabulous, it is certainly a wonderful circumstance, in the history of mythology, that all the corrupted forms (engrafted on the original *Panei* by which the early world was instructed), should have been collected together, in the name of Pan at Rome; to which city that epistle was to be addressed, in which the Gentile nations are convoked to the bar of revelation, and found guilty of having 'changed the truth of God into a lie,' and of 'worshipping the creature more than the creator.'

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE MESSIAH.

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WE gladly turn from these vanities of the Gentiles, to the manifestation of light and truth in the fulfilment of the promise of God.

It is impossible ever to approach the consideration of this subject, without being oppressed by a sense of its magnitude ; without being so filled with wonder, at the exceeding riches of the grace and goodness of God contained in it, as to feel that the mind of man never can estimate, nor the pen of man express, the full meaning contained even in that short and most simple of all phrases, by which it is described in the Bible, ‘ God spared not his own Son.’ When man fulfils any promise, his ingenuity is generally set to work to devise the easiest mode of keeping his word ; the narrowest construction that he can put upon the promise he has made ; the most scrupulously literal, or the most evasively general way in which he can interpret or implement it. So much is this the natural disposition of the evil heart of man, that he judges of God as he would of himself or his neighbour ; he ‘ thinks him alto-

gether such an one as himself;’ and although ‘God has *commended* his love towards us,’ in fulfilling his promise in the most unspeakably complete, rich, and abundant manner,—yet how often are we found thinking, speaking, and acting, as if the words ‘It is finished’ never had been pronounced without the gates of Jerusalem !

In the brief references we now propose to make to the coming and kingdom of the Messiah, as described in the New Testament, we shall endeavour to confine them, as strictly as possible, to the public attestation which was afforded, that the Good thing promised to the fathers was fulfilled to the children.

In all the antepasts of this event, in word or in figure, the Good was always placed in striking contrast with the Evil. Out of darkness, light arose ; in the midst of wrath, mercy beamed ; where sin abounded, grace did superabound. All were cases where the hand or help of mortal would have been in vain ; where it was the Lord’s doing, and marvellous in the eyes of those who then beheld it, or who have since heard of it. There was, in every case, a uniformity of procedure, which indicated the same Almighty hand ; the same unchangeable purpose ; the same unsearchable Wisdom. ‘A very present help in every time of trouble,’ was always the proof of the presence and the power of the God of Israel.

So, when the time of the Promise drew nigh, every thing was conducing to a state of the world in which the manifestation of the Truth would appear in marked contrast with the darkness that prevailed. The nations generally had cast off the



fear of God, and changed his truth into a lie: they worshipped and served the creature more than the creator. Even the chosen people of God had wholly forsaken the fountain of living waters. They forsook God that made them, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their Salvation. He had given them a law by the disposition of Angels. He had spoken to them himself from Mount Sinai. He had given them a figuratiye inheritance—a land flowing with milk and honey; and established ceremonies and feasts which all spake of another day. He gave them typical Mediators, Prophets, Priests, and Kings. He gave them line upon line; precept upon precept; sent them his servants the Prophets, —rising up early and sending them,—but they would not hear. Which of the Prophets did they not persecute, who shewed beforehand the coming of the Holy and Just One? And they added this to all their other transgressions, they would not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. They abridged his holy law; perverted its precepts; took away from the infinite perfection which it required; and made it a ground of self-righteousness. And, that others might fall into the same pit, they abstracted the key of knowledge from that law; shut their own eyes, and darkened the minds of others, to the perfect righteousness and glorious hope of which it testified. Thus they filled up the measure of their transgressions. ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them who are sent to thee; how often would I have gathered

thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !'

Darkness, thus, covered the promised land, and gross darkness the nations. God looked abroad on the children of men, to see if any did good. There was none righteous, no, not one; they had together gone out of the way; they had together become unprofitable.

It was in such a state of darkness, destitution, and guilt, that a light arose to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel;—and so wonderful was that light, that, although the rulers and the people joined with the Chief Priests and the multitude to imbrue their hands in the blood of the Messiah,—the first emanation of that light was seen in a preaching of forgiveness to his murderers, and pardon to his enemies! 'Who, O God, is like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee!'

But to understand why such a manifestation of mercy as this could have been made, we must enquire who the Messiah was; and what he did, that could have produced a result so wonderful.

Even if no previous revelation had been made, it must be evident that the world was *then* (whatever we may think it has been at other times) in a situation beyond the reach of *human* aid. Suppose that a great Prophet had stood up, blameless, as far as man can be, in his life and conversation; that he had vindicated the law of God, and fulfilled its precepts; acted in every respect agreeable to God, and left an example, which, if followed, would be sure

to gain the Divine approbation : of what possible benefit could that have been to any one but himself, or to those who lived long enough after him, to hear of what he had done, and to follow the ensample he left? In what way could it atone for sins that were past? By what conceivable sophistry could it have removed present guilt; for example, in the case of the thief on the cross?

There is another feature of the case, and an important one, to be kept in view also. Suppose that this exemplary man is opposed, reviled, persecuted, betrayed, and murdered : could any thing result from that but an aggravation of the guilt of the murderers? God might, of his infinite mercy, have pardoned them; but how could he have done so, and yet have vindicated the law, which his servant had honoured, but which his murderers had dishonoured, by condemning him to die? No. If the case was desperate before, it would have been rendered doubly so, by the violence done to the vindicator of the Divine law.

The conscience of man and all revelation bear testimony to the necessity of a *propitiation*,—of a substitute. The same authorities tell us, that to be a propitiation for guilt, the substitute must suffer. But where was one to be found who could suffer more than the offence of Adam had justly brought upon all his seed? *Death* has come into the world, through his disobedience; and reigned, even over those who had not sinned after the similitude of his transgression. ‘In Adam *all die*.’ What benefit could result to those in their graves, by another son

of Adam going to the place appointed for all living? Could his suffering, as they all had done more or less, or dying, as they all had done, be a propitiation for them? We read of those who were killed all the day long; who were accounted as sheep for the slaughter; of those who loved not their lives unto the death, for the sake of the truth which they maintained. Surely, if the adherence of one man to the truth, and his death because of it, could be supposed to have any weight in such a matter,—the death of so many, and the killing even of the prophets sent to Jerusalem, might have been much more efficacious!

Man gropes in the most interminable darkness respecting death, and sin, of which it is the reward, until he takes up the Bible, and learns from it who Christ was. ‘What think ye of Christ, whose Son is he? The Son of David. How doth David, then, call him LORD?’ The answer to this, gives the answer of a good conscience towards God, through the *résurrection* of Jesus Christ from the dead. Any thing short of the character in which David anticipated him, when he ‘foresaw the Lord always before his face,’ consigns man to darkness and despair, in the view of death and the judgment.

The first thing which strikes man, on opening the Scriptures, is the character of God, so uniformly spoken of there, as LOVE; and as the God who keepeth the covenant and the mercy for ever, in which that love is manifested. At the same time we read that ‘justice and judgment are the establishment of his throne;’ that he is ‘a jealous God,

who will *not* forgive transgression;' and we see daily proofs of this, in dust returning to dust; and very alarming instances of it, in plagues and pestilences, sent amongst the tents of his chosen people. These apparently opposite attributes of God, joined to the fear of death, would for ever doom us to 'a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation,' did we not see in the Scriptures every attribute of God declared, elucidated, and reconciled in the Son of his love. 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared him!' To declare Him, 'he left the glory which he had with Him before the world was;' veiled that glory, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. 'HEREIN IS LOVE.' We never can comprehend any thing of the character of God, as the God of Love, until we behold him not sparing his only begotten Son. Here the True God and Eternal Life are seen, in distinction from all idols; in distinction from every other *idea* of God which man can *frame* in his own mind. This is an idea of God that never could have been *framed* or put together by man. No man could ever have conceived such perfection of Love as this; it never entered into *the heart* of man. Every other idea of love, as an attribute of God, which man can imagine, is a mere fiction, a creation of his own brain; and God will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to such graven images. 'In this was manifested the Love of God, in that He **SENT** his Son into the world.' Herein every attribute of God was

displayed in perfection; Infinite Love in sending the Son; Inflexible Justice in visiting iniquity on his righteous head; and wakeful Jealousy of every thing that tarnishes the lustre of the Divine character, as manifested in the *humiliation of the Son*.

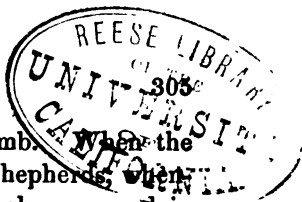
That the Substitute on whom the help of the helpless was to be laid, was to be *humbled*; that there was to be suffering first, and glory following; was the ceaseless testimony of all the types, figures, and prophecies by which the coming of the Messiah was foretold. 'O fools, and slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and *all* the prophets, he expounded to them, in *all* the Scriptures, the things concerning himself.'

'As it is appointed unto man once to die,' so the humiliation of no substitute could be of any avail to 'the sons of death,' unless of one who could 'destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' The power of Satan lies in darkening or obscuring the character of God; in giving his decrees or his dealings the semblance of austerity or inequality. Any merely human substitute standing up, fulfilling all righteousness, and thereby purchasing life for himself and all others (had the thing been possible), would not have bruised the head of the serpent; or, what is the same thing, have silenced the arguments by which he instils unbelief. It would, still, have appeared as severe to visit the iniquity of one upon all his posterity, as it would have seemed arbitrary to give them life for what, in

strict justice, should have benefited no one but the obedient party. God would not have appeared light in this, and in him no darkness at all. But, *in Himself becoming the propitiation*, there is not only a Substitute provided, the value of which cannot be calculated, nor the love manifested measured; but the Sovereign Power of God, in connexion with inflexible Justice, to *give* Eternal Life to as many as he wills, so clear, that the enemy gnashes his teeth while he confesses it. The uplifted weapon of the adversary falls powerless while he beholds his great triumph, the grave, only a pause in the song of mercy, to make the following note more sublime—only a passing cloud over the beams of the Divine Glory, that they may shine forth with a resplendence, to which all his opposition has only given lustre by the contrast. Thus, though the wages of sin be death, the *Gift* of God is Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Thus, the light of Eternal Life emanates out of darkness; and the hope of it stands on no precarious ground, but on the Divine worth of Him, who says, ‘Fear not: I am the first and the last. I am the Living One, and I became dead; and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen. And have the keys of the separate state and of death.’

The divine dignity and worth of the humbled Substitute shines through all the record concerning his humiliation. It is equally acknowledged at his birth and at his ascension. He did not receive the name Jesus, which is above every name, *after* he had finished the work the Father gave him to do, but

THE MESSIAH.



before he was conceived in the womb. When the angel announced his birth to the shepherds, when ever he mentioned *the sign*—‘the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger’—*suddenly* there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and goodwill towards man.’ These infants, whose angels do always behold the face of their heavenly father, and who form so large a portion of the heavenly host, know *who it is* that is lying in the manger. They do not wait till he had fulfilled all righteousness, ere they commence that perfection of praise, which the children in the temple re-echoed when Jesus entered there, and which shall never die away in heaven. Had this been merely man, God alone, who knows the end from the beginning, would have known whether he would finish the work given him to do. No doubt on this matter delays the song in heaven. Man thinks it derogatory to God that he should be found as a babe—this is the joy and the glory of the angelic host and of the redeemed. Even the wise men of the East, heathens as we esteem them, had consistent and scriptural views of the divinity of the Immanuel; for, even in the manger, they offered to him royal gifts and WORSHIPPED HIM.

Why should we dwell so much on *this* part of ‘the Mystery of Godliness?’ Is it because, with many, we annex some mysterious and indefinable ideas to it, which constitute it a part of an incomprehensible something called *Faith*? Nay: the scriptures acknowledge no darkness of this kind in the charac-



ter of the God of Israel ; with him there is no *variableness* nor *shadow*. The Lord Jesus was from the beginning, and is 'the brightness of the Father's Glory.' He is this, not in some incomprehensible, heavenly, or celestial sense ; but because, in the manifestation of One from the Godhead to magnify the Divine Law, to fulfil it, to lie in the grave and unsting it and its ruler, the character of God as Love, and as Light, is declared, without a spot to dim its lustre, without a shadow to obscure its glory. Every thought which detracts from the Eternity and Divinity of the Son, obscures the Glory of the Father. It signifies not whether that thought take the form of a doubt, of an express denial, or of uncertainty about the finished nature of his work, they all obscure the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus ; they all darken the meaning of the voice from the opened heavens, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' They all draw a veil over the figures by which that good pleasure was testified.

As the glory of God lay in the humiliation of the Son, so the testimony which is borne to that humiliation is as complete as the evidence that He who was humbled was God. Instead of coming into the world in power and glory, and commencing his public ministry at once, he is found as a babe. Even in this we see GOD. Who but God would have thought of providing such a hope, concerning *infants*, as this ? Who is there that has laid his child in the dust, that would part with the assurance given in the scriptures, that *with such* God took part

in flesh and in blood,—who would exchange this blessed intelligence for all the abstract reasonings that the tongue of men or of angels could indulge in, respecting the salvation of infants? Who can speak *to the heart* as God does? The heart which does not acknowledge the divinity of the babe of Bethlehem, never felt what it was to see his own child suffer the consequences of its parent's guilt.

As the Lord Jesus came to redeem those who were under the law, therefore he was made under that law; that in all things he might be made like unto his brethren: and for thirty years remains in obscurity: honouring the first commandment with promise: increasing in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man. Herein is complete attestation that the Lord did not nominally, or in mere outward appearance, or form, take part with flesh and blood. He placed himself in a situation of complete *dependence* on his Father, that he might '*learn obedience!*' Wonderful, indeed, was his love towards us,—passing knowledge. He came to show how fully God might be *trusted*; he therefore became *a servant*. The favour of God was ever shown to those who delighted in his character, as manifested in his law; in the intimation, therefore, that Jesus increased in favour with God, we have assurance that in Him was fulfilled, in perfection, all that was said in the psalms of the man who delighted in the law of God. David spoke concerning *Him*. He stripped himself of his glory—became a servant—cast his whole dependence on his Father for support, in his humiliation—and took no armour

with him, when he entered on his public ministry, but the word and the law of God. Therefore did the Father delight in him, and say, 'Behold my Servant whom I have chosen, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth : ' and the Son said, ' My meat and my drink is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish his work.' The pride of man thinks this derogatory to God. This is the glory of God. ' We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth.'

Ere he enters on his public ministry he is washed, or baptised, as the priests were ; and he is anointed, for ' lo ! the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a *dove*, and *abode* upon him ; and there came a voice to him from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' We must deny the divinity of the Holy Ghost, as well as of the Son, ere we can deny the union of the Divine Three here. The Holy Ghost came down from heaven and *abode* upon him : and *after* his descent, there came a voice from heaven. Here were *two* from heaven. Dare we exclude the third Divine Person here, because He is in the form of a Servant ? Shall the heavens open to declare his Divinity ; and shall man, for whom he humbled himself, deny him ?

Even Satan, in the temptation which followed, acknowledged his divine character ; and, with his usual craft, attempts not to deny it, but to prompt to the manifestation of it, in some manner less humiliating than by dependence on God. The answer is always in grand consistency with the

character in which the Lord appeared: '*It is written,*' being the only answer given to the seducer. Foiled in his attempt at direct seduction, the enemy puts it into the heart of a favoured disciple to suggest the same thing: 'Get thee behind me, Satan.' is the rebuke, 'for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.'

In his doctrine, he speaks as the Lawgiver himself, 'with authority;' and, in many instances, he shews himself 'the searcher of hearts.' In his discourses, he vindicates his Divinity, and his equality with the Father; while his perfect dependence upon him, and the perfect unity of the Divine Three in the work he was to finish, give consistency and power to all his refutations of the sophistry of the lawyers.

In his miracles, he does works which none but Jehovah could perform; which none but Jehovah would ever have thought of employing as proofs of Divinity. Instead of performing some of those 'signs,' which the Jews sought after,—some amazing and brilliant exhibitions of power, in the presence of the-congregated nation,—he heals the sick, cleanses the lepers, raises the dead. The blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk. The blind and the lame come to him in the Temple, and he heals them. Here were *signs* grandly illustrative of the object of his humiliation; *signs* illustrative of *the healing* which reaches every guilty conscience which believes the testimony from Heaven concerning him. And to crown all those works, like to which there are no works, and which prove him to be God,

he 'preaches the Gospel *to the poor.*' This is the last thing which the wisdom of man would adduce, as a proof of Divinity; but it is one of the brightest beams reflected from the face of that God, who 'puts down the mighty from their seats, and exalts them of low degree.' It is one of those proofs which speak to the heart; and which teach the insufficiency of all language to describe the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge:

Those who attended the Lord and ministered to him, in the days of his flesh, were often in great doubt and darkness respecting the sufferings and death of which he spoke; were often in great perplexity regarding himself, and the divinity of his character. His appearance was so *humble*, his visage more marred than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men; the court he gathered round, so unlike what the king of Israel was expected to hold, that even his forerunner, John the Baptist, began to entertain doubts if this could be the Immanuel. No wonder, then, his own brethren were offended at his appearance, and that the worldly wise and the illustrious held him in derision. He was despised, rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him. It was not until they had fulfilled all that was written of him — until he was crucified, buried, and raised the third day, that the extent of his humiliation, and the grand meaning of it all, was seen and felt. The sufferings under which he expired on the cross — not from the wounds that man had made, but from the hiding of

the countenance of the Father — declared him to be the Lamb which God had provided to himself for a burnt offering. Under the fire from heaven he expired; that fire, turned aside from a guilty world, to the head of the innocent sufferer. But his resurrection declared him to be ‘THE AUTHOR OR PRINCE OF LIFE.’ Here, then, was a propitiation, only to be bounded in the extent of the atonement it made, by the worth of the sufferer,—and that sufferer was Divine. Here was Eternal Life, only to be limited by the power and will of the purchaser to bestow it,—and that purchaser, ‘God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.’ Here, indeed, was the God who said, Let light be, and light was; here was Mercy, in its full extent, rejoicing over the most awful display of judgment, which ever was exhibited before men or angels. God could now be just in forgiving iniquity of the deepest dye; yea, even in forgiving the betrayers and murderers of the Son of his love; because the atonement had been as infinite in value, as the grace and mercy were boundless in which it originated. Thus was the Righteousness of God brought in, and preached to Jew and Gentile without difference: thus that ‘Righteousness came forth as light, and his Salvation as a lamp that burneth.’ All rests on the divinity of the offering: take that away, and the sufferings of the Lord Jesus only render the ways of Heaven more dark and intricate: take that away, and every type and figure remains to be fulfilled; restore them, and light rises out of obscurity; the poor is raised from the dunghill to be set with princes; and ‘Thanks be to God for his

unspeakable Gift,' may resound from all who hear that that gift is in his Son.

What expectation of mercy, which ever was looked for by Angels, or hoped for by man, is not more than fulfilled, on the morning of the first day of the week? Two of the Angels who beheld the light, at first, beaming out of darkness; and who were led, from that sign, to anticipate an illustration of the character of God, which would for ever shut the mouths of the apostates;—behold that illustration as they stand, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Filled with wonder at a discovery so glorious, they say, 'Come, see the place where THE LORD lay!' Knowing the infinite dignity and worth of Him who had lain there, they consider no words they can use so fitted to preach peace on earth and good-will towards man, as a simple attestation to the fact, that Jehovah had lain there.

The faith of the worshippers of old, who had brought an offering to the presence of the Lord, was now justified; for the fire or sword of God's wrath had awoke against the true Substitute, the Man God's fellow.

Wherever mercy had been looked for,—'whatsoever plague, whatsoever sore, what prayer or supplication had been made by any man, who knew the plague of his own heart, and had prayed towards heaven, the dwelling-place of the hearer of prayer,' it was now seen why God had heard in heaven, his dwelling-place, and when he heard had forgiven; for *here* a propitiation had lain, for whose sake God

was 'faithful and just to forgive iniquity and cleanse from all sin.' What hard question was not now answered? What question concerning death and the grave was not now expounded? What hope concerning the resurrection of the body was not now confirmed?

Hence all the witnesses to this event had but one object, in all their testimony and in all they wrote,—the Divinity of the Sufferer and the certainty of his resurrection. These proved, and light shone in and beyond the grave—these taken away, and man still sat, and would for ever sit, in the region and shadow of death.

When we examine the nature of the record concerning the Messiah, we behold, as in the previous testimony concerning him, something very different from what man would have testified; something which incontestibly proves its divine origin. Instead of an artificially-constructed story, and laboured disquisitions to prove its truth, we find the pens of different witnesses employed, some of them evidently 'ignorant and unlearned,' to tell what Jesus began both to do and to teach, so far as they themselves were eye-witnesses, or heard on undoubted testimony; while the doctrinal elucidations and discussions, to which the news concerning the Messiah gave rise, are in the form of letters, originating in questions that arose, or errors that crept in, amongst the first professed believers of the Gospel.

In the first of these historical records, by the Evangelist Matthew, written originally in Hebrew, and intended evidently, in the first place, for the



Jewish converts, we see such events and matters dwelt upon, as more particularly pointed out the Messiah as the promised Son of David. But how different is his testimony concerning this, from what would have been written, had the expectation of this Son been fulfilled in the way man would have expected? There are no doubt many allusions in his Gospel to events happening, 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by' this or the other prophet; but these are all circumstances which it never would have occurred to man to select for fulfilment. It is noticeable, too, that every one of these recorded by Matthew, are *literal* fulfilments of the prophets; fulfilments which required no spiritual applications to verify them; *facts*, which all his readers were cognizant of. While by such things, brought to pass by the evident interposition of the hand of Heaven, he clearly proves that Jesus of Nazareth was the very holy Child, Immanuel, God with us, promised to be born of the Virgin; he narrates discourses and acts of our Lord, which could have been spoken and done by none but Jehovah himself.

In Mark's narration, again, which omits the proofs given by Matthew, of the fulfilment of the Old Testament, and which seems therefore to have been intended for those who were not so conversant with the Scriptures of the prophets, the miracles are more dwelt upon. The desire of all nations, the promised Messiah, was to do many wonderful works. What works can bear comparison with those miracles? Well might the Lord say, 'Believe that I am in the

**Father and the Father in me, for the very works' sake.'**

By Luke more copious particulars are given, on many matters of great interest to the believers, from the first annunciation of the birth of the Harbinger, to the ascension into heaven of the glorified body of the Captain of Salvation. Yet none of them are those which gratify curiosity; none of them such as a philosopher would prize; but all of them of unsearchable value to the poor, the miserable, the wretched, the blind and naked—to man in all his misery.

The Apostle John seems to have had his attention more directed, from his intimacy with the Lord, to the Divinity, which the depth of his humiliation, instead of obscuring, only rendered the more apparent. That Divinity, as it appeared in his incarnation, in his doctrine, in his miracles, in his troubles, in his agony, in his sufferings, in his death, and in his resurrection, was a theme which appeared to this beloved disciple so boundless, so inexhaustible, that 'I suppose,' he says, 'the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.'

Take these evangelists together; and if the wisdom of the wise, or the understanding of the prudent, could ever have imagined any other declaration of the Godhead, any other discovery of God, so calculated to suit the case of 'sons of death'—so fitted 'to deliver those who, through fear of death, have been all their life-time subject to bondage,'—as the account they give of Jesus of Nazareth,—we shall own they have failed in proving, what

they undertook to prove, that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; that that Word was in the beginning with God; that that Word was God. This is the real test to bring their testimony to. It professes to be a Gospel, that is, good news. It professes to be intended for those who sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death; and it declares that to those who sit there, 'light is sprung up.' Let the truth of their testimony be tried there—let it be sifted with this certainty full in view—that 'it is appointed to man once to die, and after death the judgment;' and let the wretched man doomed to this, say whether it be not the grandest news which ever reached his ears, that He who died upon the cross, was buried, and was raised the third day, was God. Let him say, if such a thought *could ever* have originated in the heart of man, as the provision of such an atonement as *that*. Let him say, if the thought itself does not prove its divine origin; and if he do not confess that the finger of God is here, he is something more than mortal, *or less*.

On the ascension of the Lord Jesus into heaven, the Divine Spirit came down *visibly*, to attest the entrance of the Great High Priest into the heavenly holy place; and, by miraculous gifts, to confirm the testimony of those who were to bear witness of his resurrection. In all their testimony, whether to Jew or Gentile, we read the language of men, testifying the fulfilment of *an anticipated* event; fulfilled, indeed, in an unanticipated *manner*; but so fulfilled, as to carry conviction to the mind of its

being the work of God alone; so fulfilled as to be good tidings of great joy; to be life, and light, and joy, and peace, to every one who credited the report.

In the execution of this commission 'to the Jew first,' the point to which all their evidence tends, is the fulfilment of the writings of the prophets. They show that the divinity, the sufferings, the death, and the following glory of the Messiah, had been the expectation of the holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and, in language which either pricked the hearts of their hearers to the acknowledgment of the truth, or to a hatred of it, which made them 'gnash upon them with their teeth,'—they proved that in condemning, betraying, and murdering the Author of Life, they had fulfilled the voices of their own prophets, which were read amongst them every Sabbath-day. While they did this, they accompanied their condemnation with a proof that it was their own Jehovah, in all the glory of his character, they were declaring to them; when they said to these very betrayers and murderers, 'through this Man is preached to *you the forgiveness of sins*;' 'the promise is to you and to your children;' yea, to you who said, 'his blood be on us and on our children.' The Son had come into the world to manifest the Name of the Father as the God of Israel—as the God who keepeth covenant and mercy for ever; and what more glorious proof could be given of this, than in the mercy which rejoiced over judgment, in the preaching of forgiveness to the murderers of the Son of God!

When the witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus turned to the Gentiles, we do not find them enter into laboured proofs respecting the existence of a God; or a comparison of the philosophy and morality, taught by the Lord Jesus, over that in vogue amongst the Greeks and Romans: their preachings were simply attestations to *the fact* of the incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection of the Son of God; and the all-sufficiency of his righteousness, or righteous offering, to atone for the sins of a world, brought to the bar of revelation and found guilty. In what they witnessed concerning this Jesus of Nazareth, they contended that the true character of God was seen; a character combining the most perfect justice and holiness, with such unbounded mercy and forgiveness, as was every way sufficient to give the answer of a good conscience towards God, and to relieve the mind of the most wretched, on the only matters of *real* moment—death and the judgment.

Those who believed the apostolic testimony, consorted together, and strengthened each other's minds under the contumely and suffering to which it exposed them, from those who saw nothing but foolishness, or from those who apprehended danger to their craft, in the light of the truth. The confirmation of the faith and hope of these congregations—their unity and order, were the great objects of the anxiety and care of the Apostles. For these purposes their epistles were written. They had shown them the Good, in the declaration of the character of God, shining in Jesus Christ; they had exhi-

bited to them, there, God as wholly Good; and they called upon them to manifest a sense of this, by 'doing justly, loving mercy, and *humbling themselves to walk with their God.*' Amazing view of the character of God this; that man, instead of having to exalt himself, has to humble himself to walk with God!

In the Epistles of Paul to the Gentile churches, we see all the argumentative part of his writings founded on the original knowledge possessed by the Gentiles of the truth of God; on the guilt which the corruption of that truth entailed on them; on the complete amnesty afforded, in the elucidation of that truth, at the cross of Jesus Christ; and on the hope of eternal life, abundantly provided, in his resurrection from the dead. He does not argue, or prove these things, by showing that the Gentile corruptions contained attestations to them; this would have given stability and importance to their corruptions, instead of sweeping them away. But the metaphors in use amongst them, were now incorporated with their languages; and rendered intelligible to them the powerful appeals to their understandings and consciences, regarding their own guilt, as well as the exquisitely beautiful similes by which 'the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,' was declared to them.

In the same epistles he instructs how they were to behave themselves in the church of God: he warns, admonishes, and rebukes; and neglects no opportunity of bringing them back to 'the beginning of their confidence,' even 'the simplicity that is in

Christ Jesus ;' 'determining to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.'

In the epistle of this well-instructed scribe, addressed specially to the believing Hebrews, we have throughout the most wonderful attestation to the unchangeable glory of the incorruptible God, which the Spirit of God, guiding the pen of men, has left upon record. Carrying his readers back with him to the birth of creation, he shows it to have been the eternal purpose of God to reveal his character in his Son, who was to leave the bosom of his Father, and to be made in all points like as we are, that he might become head over all things to his redeemed body, and *for it* purchase every blessing ; obtain, '*by inheritance*,' every thing which man stood in need of, 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;' yea, even to the purchase of *the grave* ! He proves this from the Scriptures themselves ; quotes the passages in which the promises, the word, and the oath concerning this, are recorded ; leads his hearers into the tabernacle and temple ; expounds all that they see passing around them ; lifts the veil, and shows them the beauty of the Lord in his sanctuary. Having proved that these things testified of the day of Christ, he turns their attention to heaven itself ; shews them the antitype of all the service of the tabernacle and temple in the heavenly holy place ; demonstrates the heavenly unchangeable nature of the New Testament church ; and expatiates, in the most splendid language which the pen of man was ever directed to put together, on the Divinity and

peerless attributes of the Apostle and High Priest of the Christian profession. From this, he encourages his readers to wait patiently for that time when this Great High Priest shall again come out of heaven, in like manner as he was seen enter there; shows how the hope of that second coming supported the hearts of the elders, in their pilgrimage on earth; encourages his readers not to cast away their confidence, because they saw no outward glory or appearances, such as attended the Old Testament church; exhorts them to look at something far more glorious than was ever seen at Sinai, or in the temple, even 'the general assembly and church of the first-born on mount Zion, with Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant amongst them, and the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel;' and warns them, that although there is no sound of a trumpet, or voice of words, as at Sinai, He who spoke there continues to speak from heaven, in that word, which, although like a still small voice, is 'quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.'

In the epistle of James is clearly and forcibly pointed out, how faith is always to be known by the fruits which it produces; and the errors of those who 'said but did not,' or who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, are unsparingly exposed.

The epistles of Peter, and that of Jude, are chiefly occupied with the expectation of the second coming of the Son of Man; and with exhortations to the christian churches to 'stand fast in the faith;'



and 'to gird up the loins of their mind, to be sober, and hope to the end for that revelation of Jesus Christ.'

John,—who lived to a great age, and had seen many corruptions creeping into the churches, particularly the mystical notions of the gnostics,—warns, in his epistles, against all self-delusion on the subject of the Holy Spirit,—shows that it was given to the Apostles to corroborate the testimony they gave to the Divinity of Jesus Christ,—and asserts that its operation might always be known, from any other spirit, by the love to the truth which it produced; and that true apostolic churches would, in like manner, be distinguished from others by 'walking in love.'

The Scriptures close with a book, called emphatically '*THE Revelation of Jesus Christ.*' At its opening, His character, as the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega, the Almighty, who is and was and is to come, is plainly declared. In that character, he warns his churches, in language adapted to every situation in which they would be placed, in the seven periods between his first and second coming. John, who wrote the book, is then introduced, and introduces his readers, to the heavenly holy place, where the figurative emblems of the slain Lamb and the Lion of the Tribe of Judah are *revealed*. A revelation is there, also, made of other figurative emblems, as formerly noticed, by which instruction was conveyed under the Old Testament. The seals of the Old Testament book of prophecy are opened, and its figures and prophecies

revealed, and applied to the great Apostacy, which was to take place in the New Testament Church, emphatically called the Man of Sin, from his rise to his final consumption and destruction. The distinctive marks of this great Antichrist are pointed out, and placed in beautiful contrast with the characteristics and ornaments of the church on Mount Sion. And, as the Scriptures open with a description of the Paradise of God, and its forfeiture, so they close with a restoration to it, and to the Tree of Life, through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We have thus, most briefly and imperfectly, glanced at the nature of the Scripture testimony concerning the Incarnation of the Son of God—the sum and substance of which testimony is contained in these words of the Apostle,—that ‘Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God; to confirm the promises to the fathers; and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.’ To have examined, however briefly, the many ways in which that promise was fulfilled, and that mercy shown, would have required volumes, instead of pages; but whether we take the great and leading features of the testimony given to the Son of God, in the New Testament, or examine, minutely, the parts of which it is composed, we shall find it all centering in the Divinity, and, therefore, the all-sufficiency, of THE WORD to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself. In that Divinity we see the unchangeable nature of the purpose of God manifested—the attributes of unchangeable love

and boundless mercy in his character reconciled with inflexible justice. 'Justice and Mercy meeting together, Righteousness and Peace embracing each other.' Whoever, of old, looked for, or asked for, mercy, in the faith of the Promise, had, now, every expectation realised, beyond what it could have entered into the heart of man to have conceived; and wheresoever the intelligence went out to the world, and was credited, that God had visited his people,—and, after bringing in His own righteousness by the death of his Son, had exalted him at his right hand, as the representative and High Priest of those with whom he had taken part in flesh and in blood,—an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast, was afforded, which never could be obscured or weakened, save by denying the Divinity, or detracting from the worth, of the Lamb who was slain.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### ANTICHRIST.

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**WHEN** the Apostles went out into the world, with the testimony concerning their Lord, the power prefigured by the budding of the Rod, and the exaltation of the Horn, was verified in the effect of their preaching: it cast down high thoughts and every thing that exalted itself,—laid the pride and the wisdom of man low,—brought down the hills and raised the valleys,—so that all mankind were placed on one level, and all flesh saw the salvation of God.

Among other effects which the declaration of the God whom they ignorantly worshipped, had on the power and the pride of the votaries of the God of this world—was that of silencing the lying oracles of the groves, and casting down the images in the temples. This was one fulfilment of the contest, which John thus saw in vision, ‘Michael (the strength of God) and his angels (or messengers, the apostles) fought, and the devil fought and his angels, and prevailed not,—neither was their place found any more in heaven;’—they were cast out of

the place of worship,—they were no longer openly recognised as gods. Demon worship ceased. Many of those who practised curious arts came and ‘burned their books in the sight of all men, and they counted the price, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver; so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.’

But although the Dragon was, thus openly, cast out, and his angels with him—yet it was added, ‘Woe to the inhabitors of the earth and of the sea (the multitudes of nations), for the devil hath come unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.’ The more insidious arts of the enemy were soon apparent. He had made a pit and digged it deep, but himself had fallen into the pit he had made. He expected, in the death of the Lord, to have frustrated for ever the gracious purposes of heaven;—but through that death, life and immortality were brought to light, on a foundation which he never could prevail against. He did not, therefore, attempt any longer to remove that foundation. ‘Other foundation no man would attempt to lay,’ after the public declaration of the hand of heaven in its establishment;—he therefore confined his wiles to the superstructure built upon that foundation, and the success of his schemes was seen in the church.

It is exceedingly interesting to trace, in the great New Testament Antichristian power, which arose in Christendom itself, not merely the precise anticipations of the Apostles, but the very features which identify it as the antitype of all the figures by which

the corruption of the truth was foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

That the great prototypes of spiritual Babylon, the mother of harlots, were the Babylonish kingdom and Egypt, is evident from these names being applied to it. The corruptions and abominations of these two nations were as faithfully copied, in the New Testament Church, as the plagues with which they were visited have been or are to be executed upon her.

Babel had its origin while all the earth was of one lip ; and its power lay in the adoption of a ritual, on which the signs universally acknowledged were engrafted. The New Testament Babel arose when the nations, of that which is emphatically called in the language of revelation, 'the earth,' had become professedly christian, when they all acknowledged the same truth ; and its power has always consisted in never denying in words that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. That acknowledgment has always been made by Spiritual Babylon, even in the periods of the greatest darkness.

Babylon of old claimed a heavenly origin ; spoke with the authority of heaven ; filled her heaven with deified saints ; and changed prophecy into astrology. Her antitype claimed the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; thundered forth her decrees as if they were the voice of God ; filled every nook of her heaven with saints ; and made the fortunes of her votaries dependent on the star, or saint, to whom they committed the guardianship of their footsteps. Babylon had a furnace to which she

committed the bodies of those who refused to worship the great golden image;—Antichrist went a step beyond this,—she created purgatory.

Egypt turned signs into gods. Spiritual Egypt changed symbols into realities, and created God out of a piece of bread at her pleasure. The magicians of Egypt and Babylon did many strange things; but *this magic* of their spiritual antitype, throws theirs completely into the shade.

We need not follow the parallel farther at present, but rather enquire, briefly, how such things could ever have been attempted, or how they ever could have imposed on human beings.

Soon after christianity became general in Europe and part of Asia, it was thought necessary, in order to prevent divisions and heresies, that the true churches, in every part of the world, should be united together, according to some generally recognised form of Church Government, so as to form one General or Catholic Church. To this church, in the persons of her ministers, it was contended that the power of binding and loosing was committed. The argument on which this was founded was, that the keys of the kingdom of heaven had been given to the Apostles, and that these keys remained with their successors;—viz., with those who were regularly ordained, or could trace back their succession to the bishops of the first churches. A church so constituted required a temporal Head; a vicegerent of the head of the church, to act for him in his worldly kingdom. It was found out, or feigned, that Peter, to whom the keys had been

especially committed, had been bishop of the church at Rome. The bishop of Rome was therefore duly entitled to the honour, and he was constituted head, Father, Papa, or Pope of the church.

While these things were going on, there were two very troublesome preachers, prophets or witnesses in the church—the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. There were not wanting restless spirits, too, who appealed to these witnesses against what was going forward. There could be neither rest nor peace in the church, so long as these two witnesses continued to testify so plainly against any combination, under whatever name or pretence, to appoint a different head of the church from Him who was already enthroned in heaven; and against any body of men making laws for the church which *He* had not ordained. They spoke so plainly of *all* power in heaven and *in earth* having been committed to him, and of his being Head over all things to his body, that it became absolutely necessary to silence these witnesses. The following scheme was devised:

A Catholic or General Church should have a Catholic or general language. It was very indecorous that the church should be using various languages in celebration of the same worship. Besides, the Scriptures might be wrong translated. Accordingly they had them translated into a *dead* language, in some degree intelligible to the priests, but an unknown tongue to all the people.

This was a pretty bold step; but it answered the purpose,—the witnesses were effectually silenced.



Now nothing was restrained from the builders which they purposed to do. Now that the two witnesses were killed, who could utter a word against the possessors of the keys? They bound and they loosed, as they saw meet;—nay, they could now even appeal to the witnesses themselves, and get them to countenance all they said and did, seeing they could interpret the words, which came from those dead bodies, in any way to suit their own purposes. But to do this effectually, they first established two kinds of testimony, the oral and the written. The oral was that given to the church, and was the greatest; the written was that committed to the two witnesses, who spoke so oracularly, that they never could be understood unless the church interpreted. One of the most notable of these interpretations was the following:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, had taken bread; and when he had blessed and broken it, he said, ‘this is my body.’ As our Lord was then producing a symbol frequently used by himself in his doctrine,—a symbol prior to the law, having been brought forth by Melchisedek, and therefore not to be abrogated with the symbols of the law, but to continue a sign or symbol in the church till he came again,—he explains its meaning, by saying, this is my body, in the same way as he afterwards said to the apostle John, ‘the seven candlesticks *are* the seven churches.’ No man in a sane mind, or having an understanding above the brutes that perish, when he saw the Lord in person sitting at table, would any more have sup-

posed that he meant 'this bread is become my body, which is to be crucified to-morrow,' than he would have supposed that seven candlesticks *were* seven churches. But, said the expositors, our Lord *did* mean so; and our expositions are infallible. Why, it was replied, this is most extraordinary; can you create the uncreated God at your bidding? Yes, replied the church, we can; it may seem incredible to you, but so much the more readily ought you to believe it; for the more incredible a thing is, the more worthy is it to be an article of faith; seeing it requires much greater faith to believe an impossibility, than any thing resting on evidence. But, in fact, you have no choice in the matter; you must believe or be burnt here, and remain in purgatory, or worse, hereafter! Verily, Nimrod himself was gentle, compared to the GREAT INTOLERANT *before the Lord* in the New Testament!—Her little finger was thicker than his loins.

A church having the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the power of purgatory, worldly honours, and the creation of God at her command, was not to be trifled with—kings bowed before her, and nobles sought her altars. These altars were soon enriched with the spoils of a credulous world. To vindicate her power on earth, she set her foot on the necks of kings, and emptied their coffers. To show her influence in heaven, she raised her devotees to the stars—gave them the name of saints, set them in the niches where the gods of heathen Rome stood; made Venus give place to the Virgin Mary, —and Cupid—but the pen refuses to trace her

defilements. Yea, she restored the mighty Pan himself, under the name of All Saints! Thus did she make 'an image of the beast which had been killed by the sword of the Apostles;' and 'all the world wondered after the resuscitated monster, and the blasphemer who revived him.'

She did not stop here. She imitated the power of the two murdered witnesses. She made 'fire come down from heaven in the sight of all men.' She sent forth her decrees, as if they came from the throne of God himself; and, imitating his voice, *thundered* from the Vatican. Yea, she let loose 'a mixture' upon the earth, such as Egypt of old, with all her pruriency of filthy imaginations, could not have equalled. Monks of all orders and colours, 'like locusts,' combining the power of 'the scorpion when it striketh a man,' with the smooth face of the deceiver, came up till they darkened the air. These unclean spirits, like frogs, became in the end, as they did to old Egypt, a mortal pest; for 'they crept into houses and led captive silly women;' they came into their secret chambers, and the palace of the king itself was not spared. She filled up the measure of iniquity, and completed the character in which she was portrayed by the pens of the Apostles, when she made merchandise of the Word of God; taught the doctrines of demons, filling the world with false miracles, and peopling the air with evil spirits; 'forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath appointed to be received with thanksgiving.'

One mistake she committed. She killed the two

witnesses, but did not bury them. Their dead bodies—their bodies in a dead language—lay openly in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. In God's good time the Spirit of life from God entered into these Scriptures; they were translated into the languages of the nations—they stood on their feet, and great fear has fallen on all who have witnessed their resuscitation, while their murderers 'gnaw their tongues for pain.'

Wonderful are the ways of God. Ever the same; ever causing the wrath of man to praise him, and to accomplish his gracious purposes. Had Antichrist, instead of killing the witnesses, *corrupted them*, we, on whom the ends of the earth are come, might never have heard their testimony in their own words. It would have come to us defiled and polluted by their sojourn in Egypt. But these two witnesses 'stood before the God of all the earth.' He never lost sight of them. He had said, 'touch not mine *anointed*;' these two 'trees of oil' which supply the golden oil for keeping the lamp of the truth of God alive,—'touch not these my anointed, and do my prophets no harm.' The command was disregarded—they *were* touched, but God did not allow them to be *harm*ed. Their voice and authority, instead of being weakened, is strengthened by what was done to them. Of all the confirmations of the truth of their testimony, none is more wonderful than the witness which they give concerning themselves. They tell precisely the very time they were to remain killed and to lie unburied. They describe, minutely, the features of the power which

was to silence them. They have been so killed, by a power assuming the name of Christ—by a power fulfilling, to the minutest point, what was prophesied of it. They have come alive again at the time appointed. '*The little book is now OPEN;*' and John, as well as all the apostles and prophets, is now '*prophesying again* before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.'

Coming with such authority—with such evidence of their heavenly commission, 'Let the world hear, and all the dwellers therein.' 'The Lord, the mighty God, hath spoken, once, yea, twice; and called the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof.' He sent the apostles, personally, to bear the first testimony to the gentiles. He is now sending these two witnesses, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, like Elias (Elijah and Elisha,) '*before that great and notable day of the Lord come—lest He come and smite the earth with a curse.*'

Their voice *must* be heard, for a witness. Babylon herself *must* hear it. 'Blessed are they that hear, and they that keep, the sayings of their testimony; *for the time is at hand.*'

## CHAPTER XXX.

### THE TIMES OF REFRESHING.

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**AMONG** other consequences of the moral and spiritual darkness which Antichrist brought over christendom,—‘a great gulf has been fixed’ between the ancient and the modern world;—such an interruption or pollution of the stream of history and tradition, and such a severing of sympathies, has taken place, that the old line of feeling and of thought is not easily resumed. When the spirit of life from God entered into the witnesses, and light began to dawn from them, upon a benighted and insulted world, the attention of mankind was almost exclusively directed to the corruptions of doctrines and of forms of worship, which the Man of Sin had effected. To the exposition and correction of these, the Reformers and their successors have mainly applied the light of the Scriptures: and truly the mass of absurdity and filth was so great, that there has been sufficient employment both for their time and their energies. To this cause it seems to have been owing, that so little attention has been, comparatively, paid to some subjects, which, in the early

times both of the New and the Old Testament Church appear to have been uppermost in the minds of the disciples. In our day the subjects to which we allude are rather considered to form the higher branches of theology—whereas of old they seem to have constituted the first principles—the foundation on which christianity rested, and from which its doctrines derived most of their importance and consolation.

Of these ancient matters one of the most important, and one to which we have already referred in the course of this enquiry, was the doctrine of the Resurrection. It would appear, from the passages formerly quoted, that the views on this subject were in ancient times as simple as they were explicit. To the day of the resurrection of the Messiah first, and after him the resurrection of his people, all the worship and feasts of the Old Testament pointed. As that worship and the law explanatory of it became corrupted, this ancient hope of the church became corrupted also. But when our Lord and his Apostles took away the veil from the Old Testament, we find the restoration of this primitive hope, the leading object and design of their doctrine.

When we examine their doctrine on this head, we find that the hope of the re-union of the soul with the body, is both vindicated as an ancient and primitive hope, and is explicitly set forth as THE special and grand object for which the Lord Jesus died. We are far from saying that the hope of the resurrection is not *now* preached, as connected with the death and resurrection of the Lord of Glory.

**But** there is a manner of speaking and of writing, by no means uncommon, regarding *heaven*, which makes this hope rather a secondary matter; which would make it of very little consequence whether it were ever fulfilled or not. We repeat that we mean neither to assert that the hope of the resurrection is denied, nor the disquisitions which are entered into, regarding heaven and the state of the soul there, altogether without foundation in Scripture; but if our limits admitted of quotations, we could very easily show that, too generally, vague ideas of heavenly bliss are substituted for the explicit and often-expressed hope of the Scriptures, regarding the resurrection of the Just—a time of happiness and of joy, which is more than to compensate for the evil and distress of this life—a time of bliss to be enjoyed in the *body*, then to be raised in glory.

Were this a mere speculative or doctrinal matter, however interesting or important, we should not consider it as coming within the scope of our enquiry. But as the Scripture account of it not only vindicates, as we have seen, the faith of the elders, but affects the views we may entertain of the whole Christian economy, it deserves the careful attention of the reader. We shall not detain him by referring to those passages in the New Testament, in which the certainty of the resurrection of the body is plainly and clearly set forth. These are adduced in all their simplicity and force, in the burial service of the church established in our country; and are admitted by all, who do not *affect* infidelity, to be



amongst the most beautiful as well as the most explicit passages in the Scriptures. We wish rather to direct his attention to a few of those which point out *the time* of that resurrection as the period which was peculiarly *the hope, the desire, and the expectation* of the Apostles and Prophets.

In the first place, we find the apostle Paul saying, that it was to that time that 'the twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hoped *to come.*' When the apostle Peter preached to the Jews, at the Beautiful gate of the Temple, he said, 'Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when THE TIMES OF REFRESHING shall *come* from the presence of the Lord;' and that there might be no mistake as to what time he meant, he adds, 'and he shall *send* Jesus Christ, who *before was preached unto you*, whom the heaven must receive *until* THE TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS, *which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began!*' We had intended to bring forward other passages, but in quoting these words, we feel it would be doing injustice to this grand preaching of the Apostle, were we to adduce one other word to prove that the hope of the morning of the resurrection was *the hope* of the church in every age.

But when and how was this hope preached, by all the Prophets, *since the world began*? We formerly quoted acts and words, from the Old Testament, which vindicate the language of the Apostle, respecting the antiquity and universality of that hope. There was another mode in which it was

preached; that was, the appointment of typical periods of rest and refreshment.

When God made the world, 'he *rested* and was *refreshed*' on the *seventh* day. Now it deserves attention, that *seven* was, ever after, the complete or perfect typical number, as well as the number which regulated the feasts. The days of unleavened bread were seven. Seven Sabbaths were to be complete between the waving of the first ripe sheaf and the feast of Pentecost. Every seventh year there was to be a *release*; and at an interval of seven times seven years there was to be a year of jubilee, 'the acceptable year of the Lord.'

These various uses of the periodical number *seven*, indicate, not merely the expectation but the preaching of a period of refreshing, in some manner connected with that number. It cannot have escaped the notice of the most superficial observer of 'the signs of the times,' that there is a general impression on the mind of the world, that the coming of the Lord draws near. It will be a striking fulfilment of the figurative numbers of revelation, if 'that day,' so much spoken of by the prophets, should be, in any way, connected with the *seventh thousand* division of the years which the world is witness; remembering that an Apostle says, 'one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day: the Lord is not slack concerning his promise (of coming again), as some men count slackness.'

Considering prophecy, however, in whatever form, as given to confirm the Word of God *when it is*

*fulfilled*, and not to give rise to conjecture or to gratify curiosity, we should think it presumptuous to speculate on such a subject; at the same time, the connexion between that number and the *completion* of prophecy, is deserving attention. 'In the days of the voice of the *seventh* angel, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared by his servants the Prophets.'

Whether any thing typical may or may not be intended by the adoption of the number seven, of this we may be assured, that, as certainly as the rest followed the creation, so, in God's own good time and way, there is yet a Sabbath remaining to be fulfilled to his people. In the hope of this, his typical church observed his Sabbaths and his feasts; and the same hope is revived in the New Testament church by his servants the Apostles. 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.'

There is one practical conclusion, and an interesting one to the New Testament church, to be drawn from the ordering of the feast days under the Old Testament dispensation. In that ordering it was distinctly shown, that THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK was to supersede them all. It is so generally thought, that we have less authority for observing the first day of the week, than the Jews had for observing the seventh,—and Antichrist, with her usual arrogance, vaunts so loudly of the authority of the church being the chief authority on which the observance of the Christian Sabbath rests, that the following circumstances are well worthy the

attention of the reader. If the Jew would consult his own law a little more closely, he would find an attestation in it to 'the day of the Son of Man,' which would astonish him; and if the Christian would compare, more frequently, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament together, he would find as little use for tradition as for the Talmud.

In all the feasts of the Old Testament, the first day of the week, or the eighth day, was the great day. At the feast of trumpets, from the first to the fourteenth day, two sevens, there were blowing of trumpets, and on *the fifteenth day* there was to be 'a holy convocation.' At the feast of tabernacles there were to be seven days of various offerings, then on *the eighth day* 'ye shall have a solemn assembly.' It was on that day, 'on the last, the great day of the feast, that Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.'

Thus we see that the great day of assembling, churching, or congregating, was the eighth or first day of the week. This being appointed under a law typical in its nature, plainly intimated that 'another day' was to be brought in, and that the seventh was temporary.

But this was not all. The first ripe sheaf was waved '*on the morrow after the sabbath*,' that is on the first day of the week. Then it is added, 'ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven sabbaths shall be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath

shall ye number fifty days, and ye shall offer *a new meat offering* to the Lord.' This was the feast of Pentecost.

Now turn to the New Testament and observe—1st. It was on *the morrow after the Sabbath*, the first day of the week, that the *first fruits* from the dead, Jesus Christ, arose. 2d. It was eight days after (viz., the next first day of the week), that the disciples were met together, and Jesus stood in the midst of them. 3rd. Forty days, or exactly six whole weeks according to the Jewish calculation (that was also on a first day of the week), the Lord Jesus ascended from Mount Olivet. And 4th. Eight days after his ascension, being the seven weeks complete, from the time of the first ripe sheaf, was the day of Pentecost, or the offering of the new meat offering—that was also the morrow after the sabbath, or a first day of the week. On that day the New Testament Church was 'all with one accord in one place ;' and offered the *new* meat offering,—for they began on that day to 'continue stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, fellowship, *breaking of bread*, and prayers.'

We see from these things why it was that the first churches continued afterwards to come together 'on the first day of the week, to break bread ;' and why it was called 'the Lord's day.' It was the day the Lord Jesus arose—the day on which he ascended to heaven, and the day on which 'the Spirit came down from on high,' witnessing his entrance into heaven, and connecting the New Testament Church on earth with that in heaven. It

was not only this; but in it was concentrated *all* the typical feasts of the Old Testament, 'that great day,' of each and of all these feasts.

In the first day of the week, then, the Lord's day, centres every thing that was typified of old in a day of rest.

The seventh day of the Old Covenant was 'A SIGN between God and his people.' On the first day of the week the meaning of that sign or figure was revealed; and the first day of the week was substituted for the seventh, not only to show that the temporary sign was fulfilled and taken away, but also that every sign of *Rest* and *Refreshment* was confirmed and comprised in the eighth or first day of the week. It is God's *rest*; for the resurrection of the Lord Jesus on the morning of that day gave assurance to all men that Divine justice was satisfied, and that the Father rested well pleased in the finished work of his Son.

It is a day of rest and refreshment to all who rest satisfied with that finished work, which it is set apart to bring to remembrance. To those who are not *satisfied*, with that in which the good pleasure of heaven is declared, it is no *Sabbath*.

It is the antitype, too, of every feast: it is indeed 'the great day' of every feast; for the joyful tidings it brings are 'life, and light, and joy, and peace.' It proclaims 'liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound;' for the good news it brings, 'delivers them who through fear of death have been all their life-time subject to bondage.' In the proclamation that death was unstinged

by the Lord of Glory, the sound of the feast of trumpets and of the jubilee is heard. 'Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the *light* of thy countenance: in thy Name shall they rejoice *all the day!*' And as it brings to mind the resurrection of the first fruits, so it is an antepast of that blessed morning, when 'the bodies of our humiliation shall be changed and fashioned like to his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue even all things unto himself.'

In considering ♣ in writing of a subject so full of happy remembrances and joyful anticipations, it is lamentable that there should be any thing to mar the harmony of the theme. But we should be unfaithful recorders of a religious history of man, however brief, were we to pass unnoticed the infringement of object and institution, to which the Lord's day is subjected, even in Christian countries. We speak not of open unruliness on that day; for in the merciful providence of heaven, the Lord of the Sabbath has put it in the hearts of the rulers of every country in which Christianity is professed, to protect his day, by the arm of the law, so far as the laws of man *ought* to interfere, from all open unruliness or disquiet. In the country, too, where we now write, the mild and tolerant spirit of the government, and the church establishment, not only permits every one to keep the first day of the week, as the Scriptures and their own conscience dictate, but set the example, and encourage all others, to read the Scriptures, and to maintain an orderly and

sober conduct on that day. We are not, therefore, among those who express themselves so sorely scandalised at the way in which the Sabbath is publicly desecrated in this country. Considering what human nature is, and always will be, we should only be glad to see a continuance of the same quietness and sobriety, generally speaking, which mark the conduct of almost all classes on the first day of the week, in this country. What, rather than this, forces itself on our attention, while examining into the faith and hope of the Elders, is, how much *their* minds seem to have been drawn to the hope of 'the redemption of the body,' preached in the rests and feasts of old. With them it was all in figure; to us the figures are explained, and the hope of the resurrection is illustrated and confirmed, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Yet it may well be questioned, if the first day of the week is held with us so much a day of *commemoration*, and of *expectation*, as it was with them. Instead of using it as the *Lord's-day*, as commemorative of his finished work, and of the hope of 'a rest which remaineth' to us through him,—how often are the animal feelings and passions of human nature substituted, on that day, for operations of the Spirit of God; and the joyful songs and praises of the church of God of old, in anticipation of this blessed day, set aside, for groanings which *can* be uttered, and noises most unlike 'making melody in the heart to God!'

When the work, of which the Christian Sabbath is commemorative, was prophesied of, it was



said, 'the work of righteousness was to be *peace*, and the effect of it *quietness*.' Whoever *rests with God*, on that day, will be found praising and thanking Him 'for his unspeakable gift;' but not in the way of 'crying or causing his voice to be heard in the streets.'

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE SCRIPTURES.

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FROM a wish to keep the course of argument as simple and unbroken as possible, we have hitherto abstained from encumbering it with references, or with lengthened proofs and illustrations, of matters which, to many readers, may have appeared to require the production of authorities more numerous and learned, if not more conclusive, than those which have been adduced.

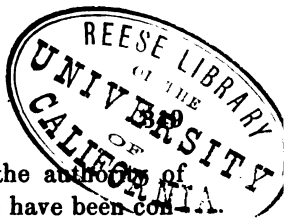
It was originally intended to have supplied any deficiency in this respect by a body of notes, in the form of an appendix; but the following considerations have weighed with us in substituting for it, in this concluding chapter, as plain an exposition as our pen can command, of the principles on which we have proceeded in consulting and in referring to the Holy Scriptures,—the only authority which ought, in such subjects as we have discussed, to have any weight with the writer or with the reader.

The considerations which have induced the substitution of this chapter in place of notes are these. Our main object has been, to *excite* curiosity and enquiry into the subjects that have been before us.

We have led the way into a rich field, by a different route from that which is generally taken. The eminence to which we have been anxious to conduct the reader, who has had patience to follow us, is one from which, experience has taught us, a more pleasing and less perplexing view of the stream of religious history is to be obtained, than from less elevated ground. If we have been at all successful, in drawing even a faint outline of the scene which presents itself, every spectator has previously been more or less acquainted with the objects which compose it, and his understanding will testify to him whether the draught be consistent and satisfactory, or the opposite. If the former, he will, we hope he will, compare it, from time to time, with 'the law and the testimony,' either in his own language or in the original, as his knowledge or opportunity permit; and it will be strengthened if true, and dissipated if false, by the application of that infallible test. If the outline thoroughly displease him, he will altogether and at once throw it aside: or, if thought worthy of notice at all, object *in toto* to the principles on which it is conducted; or, if unsatisfactory to him only in particular branches of the subject, and in special instances in which there seem to him want of authority or a perversion of quotation,—he will, mentally or actually, correct the Author by bringing in other authorities, or analysing, on different principles from those followed or acknowledged by the quoter, the passages to which he objects.

It appears to us that all these cases will be better met, at present, by endeavouring to state concisely

## THE SCRIPTURES.



**the** grounds on which we conceive the authority of **the** Scriptures, in such matters as we have been considering, rests; the claims which the English authorised translation of the Bible has on our regard; and **the** principles on which all references to it, or to the original, should be conducted. Such a course will be more satisfactory to any one unacquainted with the original; and it will better prepare the writer and his critics, should any so honour him, for contests in which his own humble and weak efforts will be of very little use to him, if he have not truth on his side.

The evidence of the authenticity and authority of the Scriptures, is a subject that has employed many able pens. It is not our intention to attempt any recapitulation of the powerful arguments by which the external and internal genuineness of the Bible, as we now have it, has been proved. There is just one branch of the internal evidence it brings with it, to which we wish at present to allude, as more immediately bearing on the subject of our enquiry.

The sayings of God, or, what is the same thing, the words of those who were authorised and guided by Him in recording his truths, whose writings his providence has preserved to us, are distinguished from all the sayings or writings of man, by the *depth* of thought and of meaning in them. They are like the jewel spoken of by the wise man, which appears more lustrous and beautiful in every new position in which it is placed. At first view they often appear unmeaning, mysterious, or dark; and, in many cases,

abound with what seem redundant or superfluous expressions; but the outer surface once penetrated, a richness of thought and imagery is found beneath, which increases in beauty every time it is examined. New beauties are discovered on every search;—expressions, which seemed at first superfluous, are found pregnant with meaning and illustration; and the more closely they are investigated, and the more frequently they are appealed to, the more deeply does the conviction take hold of the mind, that ‘never man spake’ or wrote as the Divine oracles speak.

One cause of this has been briefly alluded to in some of the earlier chapters of this work, and shall by-and-by be more closely examined; in the meantime, we shall endeavour to illustrate it by one example out of many. It is one which brings into contrast the apocryphal writings with the canonical.

On a small oratory, within a Roman Catholic burying-ground, in the north of England, (and there may, for aught we know, be the same or similar inscriptions in other places,) these words, quoted from one of the apocryphal books, are sculptured above the door-way—‘It is a holy and good thing to pray for the dead.’ Now, supposing this saying were as true as it is false, there is nothing whatever about it to stamp its Divine origin; nothing which characterises it as a saying of that Scripture which is given by inspiration of God. In the first place, there are no other sayings of Scripture with which it is in accordance,—no others which illustrate it, or which it serves to elucidate;—in the

second place, it is a mere superficial assertion, containing nothing beyond what first meets the eye or ear. Turn it as you choose, investigate it as you may, nothing more can be made of it, or extracted from it, than that somebody, at some period or other, said that it was 'a holy and a good thing to pray for the dead.' Contrast this with any of the sayings of *the* Scripture concerning death; such as 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave:' what a fund of enquiry and of reflection is instantly opened up in such a passage! Who is the speaker here? Who can use such an expression as '*I will*,' on such a matter? What is the nature of the *ransom*? Wherein lies *the power* of the grave? To these, and many such thoughts as such a passage gives rise to, the Scriptures give answers, so copious, so comfortable, and so godlike, that the expression leaves no doubt *from whence* it came; the closer it is examined, the more clearly its Divine source is perceived, the more valuable does the truth contained in it appear.

The distinction between a saying of God and of man, which appears in this instance, may be more or less observed in every part of the canonical books of the Holy Scriptures; and, when tried by this test, every comparison between the apocryphal and canonical books will serve to convince us, that the care and providence of God have been very remarkably evinced, in the separation which is now effected between them.

In former divisions of this enquiry, we ascertained that one cause of the richness of imagery and illus-

tration with which the Bible abounded, lay in the metaphorical construction and origin of the language in which the Old Testament was written. But this is not the only cause; for some of the Apocryphal books, as well as the Talmud and other writings, were composed in the same, or nearly the same language. The true origin of those qualities in the construction of Scripture, which distinguish it from other writings, will be found on attending to the purpose for which it was 'given by inspiration of God.' The Old Testament writings were given for a testimony concerning things to be fulfilled in the 'fulness of time.' As no matters were to be compared with them in importance,—so these things, to be fulfilled to the children, formed at all times, in whatever way the revelation was given, the subjects to which the pens, which inspiration guided, were directed. It did not always, at the time, appear for what purpose certain events were brought to pass, or why certain sayings were recorded;—but the meaning afterwards became apparent. Thus, every lifting up of the veil of the Old Testament, displayed always a part of the same rich prophetic view; and hence our Lord, instead of doing some stupendous miracle after his ascension, to remove the doubts of his disciples, laid open to them the most amazing miracle which ever was performed,—the attestation which had been afforded to his sufferings and following glory, in every event brought to pass, and in every saying recorded by the Spirit of God from the creation of the world. 'He expounded (or laid open) to

them in *all* the Scriptures the things concerning himself.'

Having premised these few remarks with regard to the Scriptures, in whatever language they are examined, we may now refer to the translation of them into our own tongue; from which many of our readers may think we have, in the preceding discussions, too frequently departed. So far from having done so, however, through any disrespect, we coincide fully in the general opinion regarding it, that it is as much to be admired for the fidelity of the translation, as for the general simplicity, elegance, and grammatical correctness of the language. It is not without blemishes; but these are comparatively few and far between; and we cannot hesitate to avow a conviction, with most of those who enjoy the privilege of consulting it, that its place never has been, nor is it at all likely ever will be supplied, as a whole, by any other translation. It was made at a time when the English language was in its vigour, and when it approached more closely to the terseness and simplicity of the original than it now does, or than perhaps any other modern language did at the time.

There is one circumstance in regard to the English translation of the Bible, which, while it rather enhances it, in some respects, in our estimation, renders a departure from it, in certain instances, not only pardonable, but necessary. It is perfectly evident, throughout, that the translators entered on their task with no prepossession that 'the testimony of Jesus was the spirit' of *the whole*. That



testimony is in some cases *forced* upon them ; and, in those cases, they give it in a faithfulness of translation, and nobleness of language, that cannot be surpassed. But the absence of all such previous impressions, though it obscure many places that would otherwise have shone forth, as clear as others which they and all since have applied to the Messiah,—is an amazing attestation to the truth of the prophetic record ; and ought to give great additional value to our translation, in the eyes of those who have it not in their power to consult the original. Had the translators, proceeding on the impression that *all* the Scripture testimony had a reference to the Messiah and his kingdom, in any instances appeared to *strain* any passage to that effect, or left the least room for critics or hypercritics to say so,—the value of the translation would have been greatly diminished. But when, on turning to the critical labours of such truly learned and eminent men as Bishop Lowth and others, we find numberless passages in which a far stronger prophetic reference is proved to the New Testament than appears in our translation,—such a circumstance is calculated to give great strength to the evidence which the English translation affords to those who can consult no other—that ‘the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’

Let us here just adduce one instance out of hundreds. Our translators, in the 34th Psalm, render the 19th, 20th, and 21st verses, in which the afflictions of the righteous are referred to, as the description applicable to afflictions *generally*.

**Dr. Kennicott**, after a comparison of 233 manuscripts, and 93 printed editions, establishes, most incontrovertibly, that the afflictions there spoken of, are primarily, if not entirely, the afflictions and sufferings of Him 'who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.'

Such instances, while they free our translators from every bias, serve most decidedly to enhance their translation of the Old Testament in the estimation of every general reader, as a testimony to the truth of the Apostolic preaching concerning the Messiah and his kingdom. But they do more than this;—they authenticate to the English reader, to a certain extent, every other instance brought under his notice, in which the same testimony is affirmed to exist in the original more distinctly than appears in our translation. The reasonableness of this is enforced by other considerations, to which we now wish to direct attention.

The Hebrew language, in which the Old Testament Scriptures were written, has reached us under very peculiar circumstances. The people who claim it, and to whom we would naturally apply for a key to it, used it, even in the time of our Lord, very much corrupted. At that time, as noticed in a former chapter, they had taken away the key of knowledge from the Old Testament Scriptures. This they could not have done with such a language as we previously attempted to describe, without injuring it; without substituting new, secondary, or tertiary meanings of words, for the primitive ideas conveyed by them. This was one of the ways in

which they extracted the kernel from the law, and left the dry shell. If they did so *then*, what can we expect *now*? Do they take any more just view of "the end of the law for righteousness" now, than they did then? Does not common sense teach us that the *translation*, as well as interpretation, of a word, or of a passage, from a dead language, must, in some degree, be influenced by what we conceive to be the general scope, meaning, and design of the book in which we find it? Yet the lexicons and grammars to which we are, in some measure, compelled to refer, are the compositions of a people as dead to the real beauties of their own language, as they are deaf to their own prophets,—a people whose view of their own God and their own law, was and is unworthy of God and disgraceful to themselves.

Fortunately, some early translations that were made of the sacred writings of the Jews, the references to them in the New Testament, and other circumstances, have contributed to leave us not altogether at the mercy of the Jews, for a knowledge of the sacred tongue. The wonderful thing is, that even from these limited sources, none of them altogether pure, so much of the primitive meaning of the Bible has been laid open as to place 'the scope of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth' so plain, that he who runs may read; and which none deny but those who will not look at it, or who, to obtain a name for talent and originality, affect not to see it.

As already noticed, the Rabbinical, or otherwise uncertain sources, from which Hebrew grammars

and lexicons have been compiled (according to which compilations the English translators were of necessity in some degree guided), has led, in many cases, in their translation, to the adoption of secondary meanings instead of primary; and, there is little doubt also, has produced entire mistranslations, through words having been placed in the lexicons under roots, with which, it is obvious to every reader, they never could have had any connexion. Something has been done, by linguists of great eminence, to rectify some of these malappropriations of words; and we cannot think of any thing more calculated to give weight to the Scripture testimony concerning our God and Saviour—of any thing more calculated to give the reader of the English Bible assurance that that testimony is truly reported to him by our translators—than that every correction of error or mistake, proves more and more clearly the Divinity of that Saviour to whose advent Moses and all the Prophets bore witness. Much, however, remains to be done in the same path.

That the English reader may not suppose that such corrections are directed by caprice or prejudice, it is proper to notice, that the principles which guided such critics as Lowth, Kennicott, and others, were chiefly founded on comparisons of the uses of the same word in different passages. This is the secure path, in which their labours were so amply repaid. Were it possible to enter on such investigations with a previously well-digested arrangement of the roots alone of the language, and

refer every derivation to them at once, instead of being at all guided by their present position in the lexicons, much light might be thrown, particularly on the earlier portions of revelation. But it is our conviction, that a pure list, or one approaching in any degree to purity, of the primitive roots of language, never can be looked for, until further progress has been made in the investigation of some others of the very ancient Eastern tongues; which, there is great reason to think, were branches, from the great stream of language, which broke off not very far distant from the fountain-head.

In any cases, in the preceding chapters, where we have departed from the English translation, in references to the Bible, we have endeavoured to state, we trust to the satisfaction of the scholar as well as of the English reader, the reasons for such variations, and the principles which guided us in making them. In every case the highest authorities were consulted, and the variation certified by a comparison with the other passages in Scripture in which the same term was used. In the course of such investigations, many most striking and singular corroborations of the views laid before the reader came incidentally under notice; but they could not have been brought forward without lengthening the discussions, and loading them with a quantity of learned quotations, which, for the reasons stated in the introduction, it was our study to avoid. Should opportunities afterwards offer, of laying them before those to whom they might be of interest, we shall have pleasure in doing so, whether in confirma-

tion of what has been advanced, or in reply to objections. It would be worse than presumption to suppose that no mistake may in any case have been committed: but so firm is our persuasion, from every investigation of the sacred language, of its divine origin, and divine adaptation to preach in anticipation the truths of God,—that we have no doubt every removal of a mistake regarding it, on our parts or that of others, will lead to a clearer development of the gracious purposes for which it was given.

Among the corroborative circumstances which, thus incidentally, came under notice, there is one which we shall here refer to, for three reasons; first, because it is capable so far of being explained to the English reader; secondly, because, though simple in itself, and at first sight of no great moment, it is not unimportant as it affects the previous discussions; and, thirdly, because we observe, on glancing over the chapter relative to the dispersion of mankind after the Flood, it has in part been referred to without explanation.

The matter to which we allude is the translation of the word *Kedem*. It is rendered by our translators *the East*. That it had this meaning in a secondary sense, there is no doubt; but there are circumstances which as clearly show that it had not always this signification.

When the builders of Babel chose the plain of Shinar, it is said they lighted upon it as they journeyed '*from the East*.' Now Mount Ararat, where the Ark rested, and in the neighbourhood of which the peopling of the world must have begun, was to

the westward of the plain of Shinar. When they left Armenia, therefore, and found that plain, they must have been going, not *from*, but *towards* the East. Our translators, aware of this inconsistency, say, on the margin, *eastward*; and justify this *reversal* of the adverb by referring to the case of Lot and Abram; because when Lot went from Abram, who was between Bethel and Hai, he must have gone eastward, and not from the East. It is curious, however, that in both cases those that were going away were leaving the same thing—the altar of the Lord, or the place of his worship. Noah built an altar to the Lord when he left the ark, and it was that place the people were emigrating *from*. Abram built an altar to the Lord between Bethel and Hai, and it was from thence that Lot *went out*. Be it observed, also, that the word *Kedem* is said, even in the Rabbinical lexicons, to signify *ancient*, *of old*, and some other collateral meanings. When to these things another circumstance is added, viz., that the same word is applied to the place where God's presence was denoted at Eden by the cherubim, there is strong evidence afforded that the word *Kedem* had respect, not to the situation of the places the emigrants were going to, but to the places they were leaving.

This instance will serve to shew that it is not on trivial grounds we have, in any case, departed from the English translation of the Bible; and how much reason there is to believe that such enquiries as we have been engaged in would be benefited, and the principles on which it has proceeded be justified,

by ample discussion, and the fullest enquiry into the etymology and early use of the sacred tongue.

Our remarks must now draw to a close. They have, first and last, proceeded on the superior claims, even in matters of philosophy or history, which the Holy Scriptures possess over all other writings. These Scriptures have hitherto held a secondary place, in some matters, only from want of due consultation; and have been deemed, by many, inconsistent, dubious, or mysterious, on other matters, by being more frequently appealed to for sectarian or party purposes, in support of certain doctrinal views of a speculative nature, than consulted as witnesses to the great designs of Providence in regard to the human race.

One of the consequences of these witnesses having been so long obscured from the world, in a dead language, was, that, on their re-appearance in the languages of the nations, partial and imperfect views were taken of the nature of their testimony. Matters of faith had been converted into what were called 'holy mysteries;'—in other words, the credence of any matter of faith was not to arise from its clearness, but from its darkness—it was to be believed, not because it came in all the majesty, brilliancy, and simplicity of truth, and was 'worthy of all acceptance,' but because it was incomprehensible and incredible. As the mists of antichristian darkness dispersed, before the light of truth, this delusion wore away; but it was curious how long the traces of it were visible on the minds of mankind. Some mysterious ideas still seemed to linger, regarding the



Faith and Hope of the Scriptures; and nearly as many shades of opinion arose regarding them, as there were texts in the New Testament; for every opinion could find a text to its purpose, when it was picked out from the context—taken away from the subject which it was intended to illustrate—and set up, by itself, in the most advantageous position for the wrangler. Thus nearly as great ‘a mixture’ came out of Babylon, as ever had existed in her; and thus she became well entitled to the name of ‘Mother.’ She talked very jeeringly of these parties; but she ought to have remembered that they were her own progeny; whose minds she had early imbued with legends worthy of the nursery, instead of teaching them ‘from their childhood the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation.’

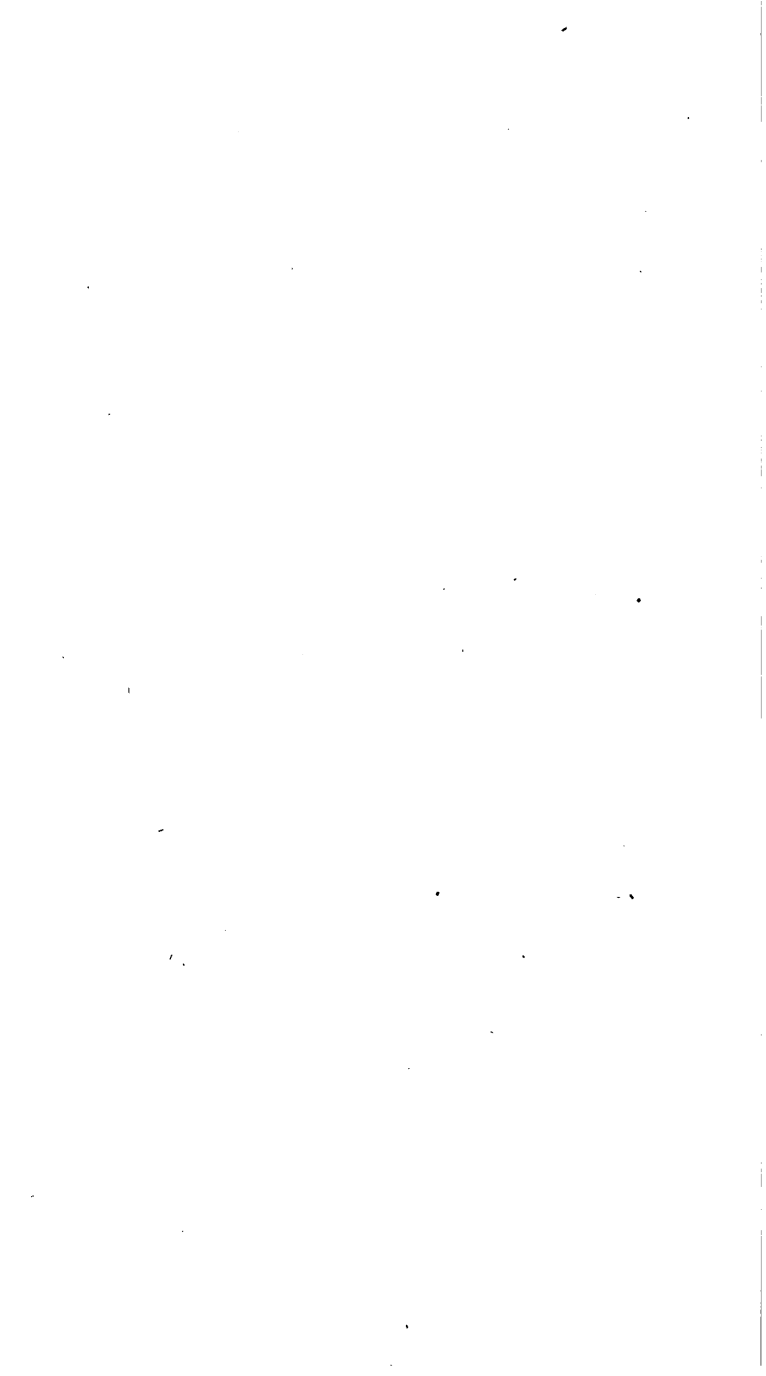
In the preceding pages we have made a humble attempt to convey to others something of the pleasure we have experienced on consulting these Scriptures; not in order to ascertain how far they support this or the other system of religious opinions, but to learn from them something of the opinions of those whose lives and sayings were considered worthy of being recorded by the Spirit of God. From what we found therein recorded, it appeared evident that there was some one great purpose of Heaven to which all had been subservient. That purpose, we saw reason to conclude, was the discovery and illustration of the character of God, as the just and the merciful—as the God who not only keepeth covenant and mercy for ever, but who makes

evil itself subservient to that mercy. This key once obtained, there was consistency and beauty imparted by it to all the record. The creation of the universe, and its order and arrangement;—the creation of man, and the gift of speech to him, whereby the objects of creation were rendered illustrative of the designs and doings of heaven;—the entrance of sin, and the introduction of the curse and its antidote;—the destruction of the old world and the dispersion of the new;—the choice of a separated people;—the revelation made to them, and their rejection of it, yea, their rejection of the Lord of Glory himself;—the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and their corruption of it;—the murder of the witnesses, and their resuscitation;—all are seen bearing testimony to the certainty and truth of the Word of God,—the unchangeableness of his own character as revealed in his Son,—and the strength of the foundation on which the faith and the hope of the Scriptures rest.

There are none who have looked, or may be induced to look closely into the Scriptures, for illustrations of the same subjects, who will not be astonished at the richness of the prophetic vein which lies beneath the external surface. So far from thinking, as they proceed, that there is any danger of over-estimating the extent of the figurative instruction which was given of old, touching these matters,—conviction will arise, at every step, that we never can again, in this world, obtain more than a glimpse of the abundant store of metaphoric teaching which was provided by God ere his purposes

were fully developed in his Son ; from which source the language was prepared in which these purposes were declared. In the Scriptures, as in all the works of God, Infinity is one of the marks of his presence and power ; and we never can investigate, or refer to them, without feeling that no language which man can use, can adequately describe any one of the countless pearls with which they are enriched.

**L'ENVOIE.**



## L'ENVOIE.

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I WAS jogging along on my highland pony, full of anxious thoughts; although then only sixteen years of age. My father's death, in the prime of life, had dispelled all the pleasing anticipations of the past year, respecting the profession of which I had made choice; and the circumstances in which our family, of which I was the eldest, were left, made it necessary for me, on their account, to turn my hands as well as my head to something likely to be more immediately productive than the profession of which I had been dreaming. That something was (from peculiar circumstances, not of a very encouraging nature) of necessity the bookselling business. It had this recommendation, and this alone, to me, it was a kind of handmaid to the mistress of my choice. So I kept down the choking sensation of disappointment as well as I could; resolved to look the world in the face, without a sixpence, over a counter; and set myself to do the only thing a boy could do, who was beginning in a country town a business on his own account, of which he was ignorant—serve an apprenticeship *to myself*, or rather to my

late father's apprentices, in the art of bookbinding; in the hope of witching the little world around me with the elegance, if not the magnitude, of my 'designs.'

Having succeeded in some of these, to the astonishment and satisfaction of myself at least and my shop-boys, I made up a small knapsack of 'specimens,' placed it on the back of a borrowed *shelty*, and set off on a canvass of my native county, for the honour of serving it with 'full sheep,' or 'calf extra.'

This was the cause and 'the manner of my sallying forth,' when, as aforesaid, I was jogging along, considerably cooled in my anticipations, of binding over the whole county, by the thrice-told tale that morning of 'not at home.' I was now in sorrowful mood approaching Monzie, a beautiful modern house, in somewhat antique taste, at the foot of the Grampians. Youth is not the season, however, for very lengthened gloomy fits; and I had almost forgotten my own griefs, in a profound cogitation about the Mons Grampius of Tacitus, and the probability of Julius Agricola having trotted along this very pass—when a party *au cheval*, consisting of two gentlemen, the same number of ladies, and the like number of servants, came suddenly on me at a turn of the road. Whether it was my nearness to the house, or something about 'my horse's virtues and my own,' which attracted the regards of the principal person in the group (the old General himself, as I afterwards learned) I do not know, but he pulled up and enquired my name. I gave it, but probably not with sufficient distinctness, for the old gentleman immediately called out, laughingly, to the rest of the party, 'Here is ——, the *horse-breaker*!' accompanying the laugh with a gentle touch of the whip, meant perhaps for myself or the

knapsack, but given to the shelty. My courser, not accustomed to 'a general salute', set off at full speed down another avenue; in the course of which expedition, my knapsack and I parted company. I recovered it after about an hour's search; but the feelings with which I now turned my nag's head homeward require no description.

Logiealmond lay in my way: so thinking matters could not be worse, nor the prospect for a juvenile canvasser less cheering, I resolved to encounter the chance of a rebuff from the mysterious Sir William Drummond—satisfied, that at all events, I would not meet *him* on horseback.

So far I had calculated justly. I was admitted to his library, where he sat immured amongst books and papers. After displaying, to the best advantage, the proofs I had brought with me, of what I deemed a new era in the arts, Sir William pointed to half a dozen old volumes, lying in a corner, which he said I might take with me to be repaired or re-bound, according to their respective wants. From some remark I made while noting the necessary repairs, the learned Baronet laid down his pen, and looking up, somewhat astonished, he said: 'What—do *you* understand Hebrew?' I told him I had studied it occasionally alone; and had found more to interest me in it than in any of the studies I had been engaged in at school, or in any language I had learned there. 'In that case,' he said, 'you can probably judge of an article I am now writing for the Classical Journal, in reply to—So and so?' on which he began to read from the paper. Had he looked up again he would have suspected, from my guilty countenance, that I had packed up more volumes than he had authorized;—he was not likely, at least, to have guessed the cause of my emotion, which was that of finding myself in



the presence of a previously unknown antagonist, in the said journal, and hearing from his own lips a reply to my last effusion! Fear, or modesty, or a mixture of both, kept me silent. We met again only in the Journal. Sir William soon afterwards went abroad, and never knew that the Philo-something of the Journal had stood before him, in his own room, in the shape of an awkward boy, whose specimens of horsemanship had that day proved more attractive than his books.

Among the volumes with which the Baronet rewarded my binding researches, was one which he cautioned me not to show to any other person, but which he wished me to read carefully. It was the *Œdipus Judaicus*. I need scarcely tell many of my readers that this was a volume, privately printed, in which the inspiration of the Scriptures was not only doubted, but an attempt made to show that a great part of the Old Testament was a treatise on Astronomy. There is still less need to remind the reader that Sir William lived to take a very different view of the matters contained in the *Œdipus*, and made ample amends, in a widely circulated book, for the errors of his private press.

The *Œdipus Judaicus* I read with great attention,—and the impression produced on my mind by it was, that, unless there were many things little dreamed of by the moderns which were known to the ancients, it would be very difficult to account, satisfactorily, for *some* of the facts stated in Sir William Drummond's book.

I lost no time in instituting an enquiry into those matters, in the only quarter where authentic information could be got; and I had not proceeded far when I obtained a satisfactory explanation of the circumstances on which Sir William had

built his system of astronomy. But in the course of this enquiry many things came under notice, which opened up to me, gradually, a very different view of the early knowledge of the world from what I had previously entertained, or could find in any book but the Bible. The further I advanced, the more I felt convinced that the view of these matters, given in that book, was the only one which explained the philosophy of the universe, the history of man, his situation and his prospects ; and during thirty years, of which there was scarcely a day in which the subject was not more or less before me, I found an inexhaustible source of interest and pleasure in the key, which the nature of my Biblical studies afforded me, to all the other books amongst which my daily avocations lay, and of which I may truly aver, few ever ‘turned over’ a greater number. Their very multiplicity prevented me, sometimes perhaps, from penetrating farther than my proper department, ‘the title page’—it certainly prevented me keeping, what I have often wished I had done, a common-place book,—but still I was in a favourable position for daily bringing to the test the principles I was elsewhere imbibing.

I often, in the course of that long period, thought of submitting the result of my researches to the public ; but, in other publications, some of them of a local and others of a more *national* pretension, I had had so much experience of what Byron *justly* considered one of the worst miseries of human life, ‘selling the book myself had made,’—that I determined not to commit a subject to the press which had become dear to me from its tried fidelity in all cases of distress, difficulty, and trial—until I could do so, not where I would be beyond the reach of the honest criticism of the press, but where no one could, for a few shillings, purchase

the right of excoriating the author by hinting to him that the necessity of purchasing his book, *out of respect to his feelings*, was felt as a tax by all his friends.

The little volume I now see nearly completed before me, might still have existed only in anticipation, had not a severe accident compelled me to choose a quiet instead of an active and bustling life. In retiring to a less literary branch of my business, I have denuded myself of Offices and Titles which may have appeared to many the only title I had to wield the pen of an author; but, in so doing, I have disencumbered myself of armour of more importance for a quarto than for a duodecimo undertaking.

Apologising for so much egotism, which, however, was in some measure called for, in order to explain why one, who professes merely to furnish the means of writing to others, should himself have ventured to employ it so ambitiously in the preceding pages,—it only remains for me to say, that I have tried to condense in them, in as plain language as I could command, the great first principles, which, in their application, I have found yield so many satisfactory solutions. I have not attempted to accompany that condensation by any applications beyond what seemed necessary for the explanation of the principles, as it would have extended the work beyond the limits I had prescribed for it—limits, which I was anxious should not, by their extent, deter any from following me. Whoever has accompanied me with any degree of interest, will make the applications for himself; and can soon judge whether the point of view, to which he has been led, is one calculated to give him a just estimate of the varied scenes of human life, which are opened to him in the page of history, or which he meets with in his intercourse with the world.

I have felt at every step my own inability to do justice to the subject. That feeling has arisen, however, from the very opposite of any doubt in regard to the principles advocated; but rather from a strong sense of their dignity, importance, and truth,—from the difficulty of selecting out of so rich a store of proofs,—and from the fear of injuring a strong cause by unnecessary extent of argument or illustration.

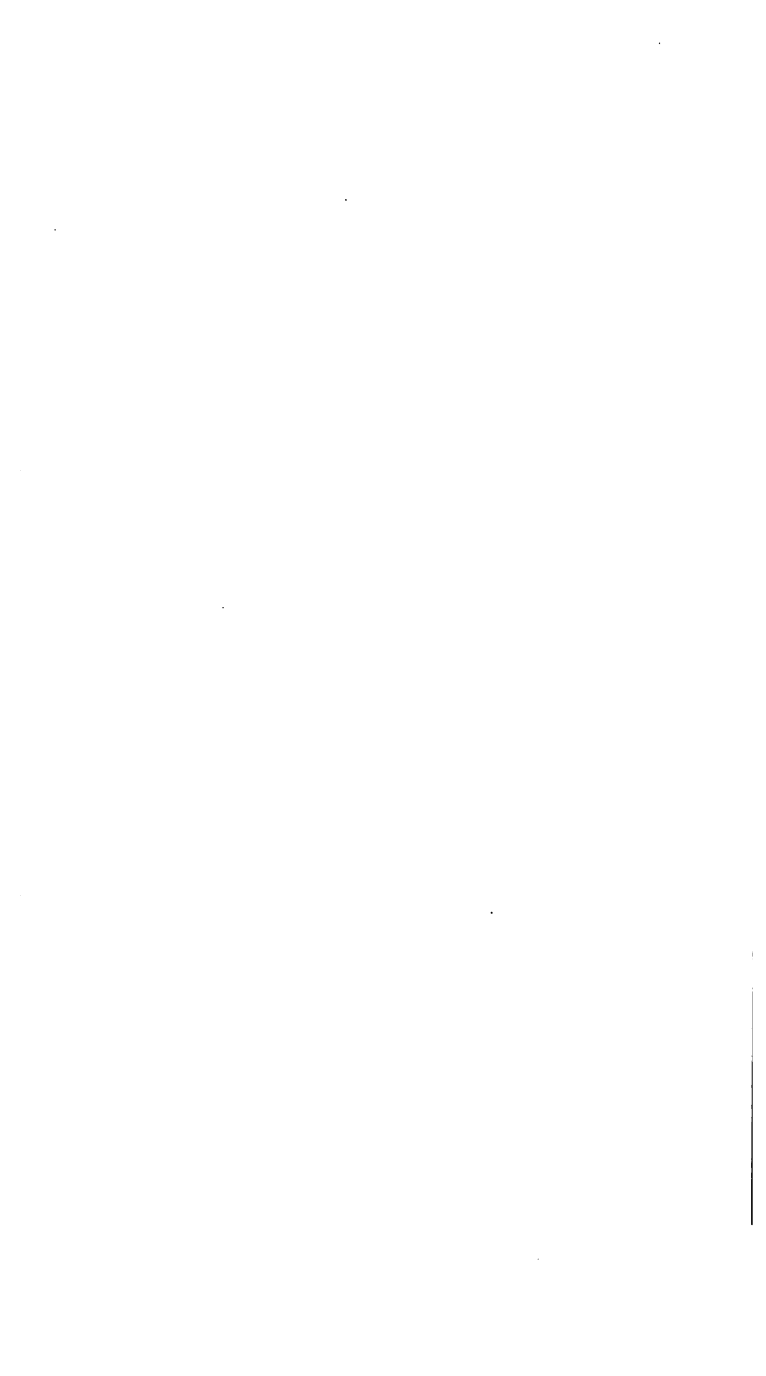
D. M.

#### ERRATA.

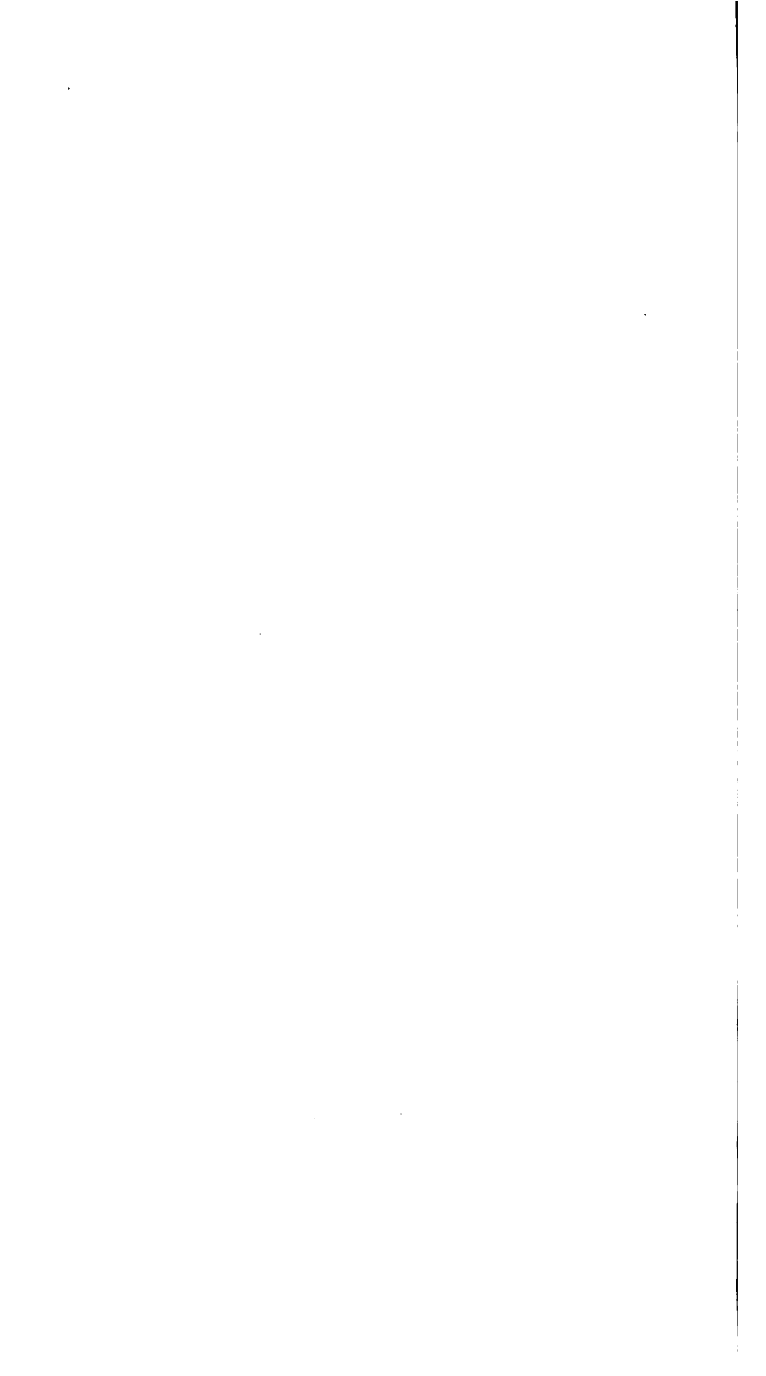
In the last line of page 282, "*westward*" has been inadvertently used for "*eastward*." The only other errors of the press which seem to call for notice are, "Procrustean," printed "Procrustian,"—and "Antitype," in more than one instance, printed "Antetype." On page 339, "world is witness" should be "world is to witness;" and on page 358, "derivation" should be "derivative."

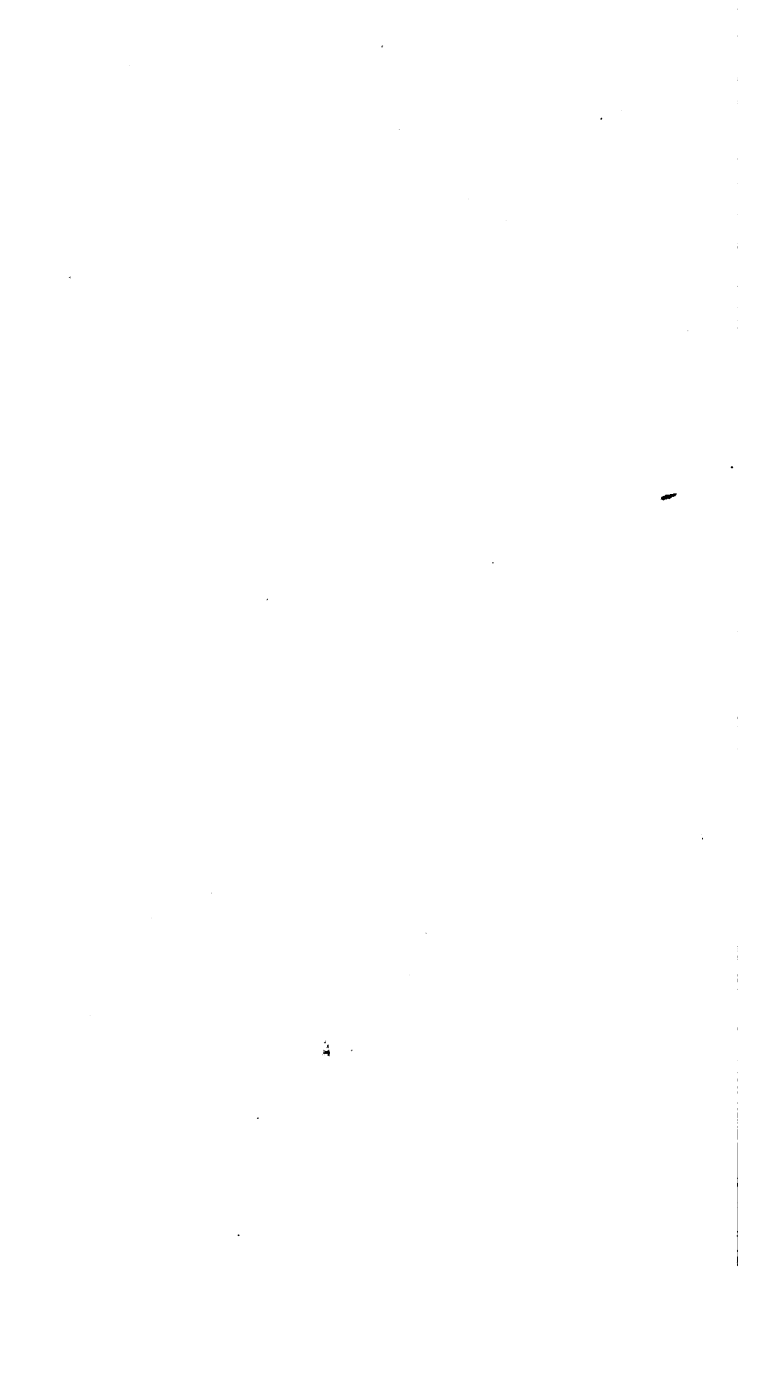
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